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# MORAL DIGNITY OF BAPTISM

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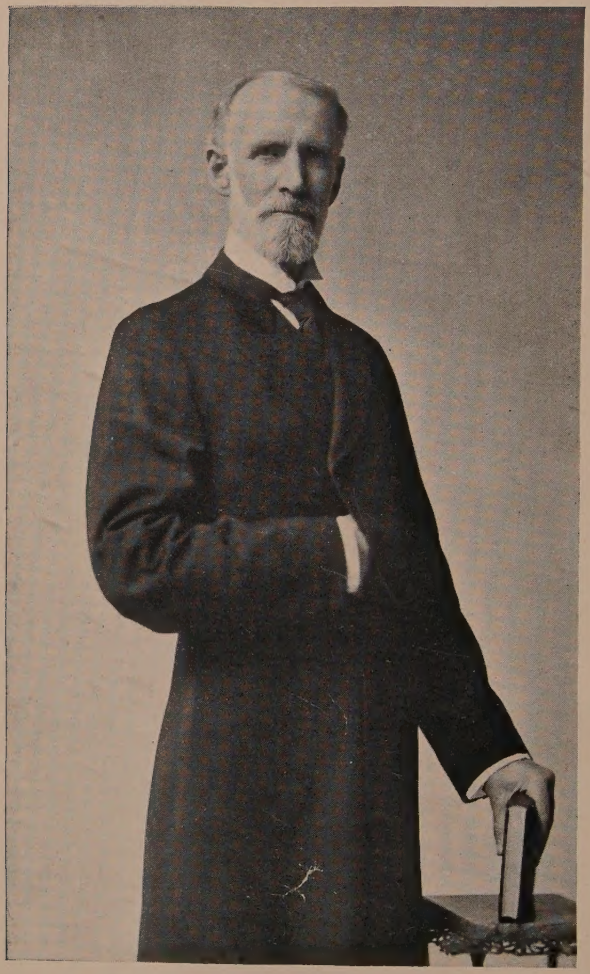

Fraternally Yours
J. M. Frost

# THE MORAL DIGNITY OF BAPTISM

J. M. FROST.

"The dignity of this act is worth the audience of kings and princes."—*Shakespeare.*

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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# FOURTH BOOK

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## THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

—*Matthew 3 : 13-17.*

## CHAPTER I.

### HAVING FELLOWSHIP IN BAPTISM.

THIS book is a growth. It was written because the message burned in the heart for utterance. Here my heart has said its earnest word concerning this ordinance of the Lord's house. Early in my preacher-life circumstances led me to an extensive comparative study of the creeds of the different denominations. I shall never cease to be grateful for that study, for its effects were marked and manifold.

For one thing, it gave me genuine admiration and more generous fellowship for those of other faith than our own. I came to know what they believe and the reasons for their faith, and considered them sincere in their convictions, and even in what some call their prejudices. This sentiment has been deepened as the years have gone on; and some of the most delightful companionships in my several pastorates have been found among preachers and laymen of other denominations. My relations with them have been in every way pleasant, and I have accorded them all I could wish for myself. There has been a friendly freedom that allowed the expression of my convictions without abatement.

Out of that study came also a new love for the ordinance of baptism, a love which through all the years

grew stronger and held its sway in my heart, as in my experience I came to see that ordinance in its rightful and exalted place. My convictions for the Baptist faith were made more intelligent; became more intense, more comprehensive in my conception of the great system of truth. This has served me many times, and always with advantage. While avoiding the controversial spirit, I have stood with outspoken words for the things believed among us; always in the spirit of brotherhood, nothing doubting, and nothing wavering as to the faith of my own people.

In my first pastorate the little book was written, "Pedobaptism; Is it from Heaven or of Men?" And in my second pastorate the pamphlet, "The Consistency of Restricted Communion," was published, having been prepared under appointment for a public address. In all my pastorates I preached much on the different phases of baptism, never as a "hobby," seldom as a specialty, never as a matter of controversy, but as rich in its own significance. And throughout these pages I have sought to give the ordinance of baptism its rightful seat among the dignitaries of the kingdom of truth.

### Fruitage of Former Years.

In my secretaryship, though crowded with labors and cares, I gathered up this preaching and study of previous years, and crowded all into one sermon, with the title—Morai Dignity of Baptism. It was preached

in many places, as occasion offered, though there was never sufficient opportunity to write it out. It was preached in the style and language of extemporaneous speech. Brethren were kind enough to request, and even urge, its publication. And finally I put it in manuscript, though under many serious hindrances; writing sometimes on the train, sometimes while waiting at the depot, sometimes at the hotel, but also and ever under the constraint of an inner impulse that I must say this word to my brethren and in their behalf.

Not until the manuscript was completed and found too long for either a newspaper article or an effective tract, did I have any thought of a book. And even then the task seemed impossible in a life crowded almost to breaking. But stimulated by brethren whom I love and honor, and who have been indulgent toward me without measure, I drove on, until my pen was laid down at the end of the last chapter, and I thanked God out of a grateful heart that the work was finished.

This sermon is the next chapter following under the title, Moral Dignity of the Act, and is left as it was written, and for the most part as it was preached, so nearly as I could make it. That chapter contains the whole book. All that comes after is development and emphasis. Each succeeding chapter is complete in itself, and sets out more fully what could be only briefly stated in the sermon. The reader, however, will find some advantage in continuity and completion of thought by taking together chapters four, five, and

six. The same is true also concerning chapters eight, nine, and ten.

## Walking in the Old Paths.

The views herein set forth are not original, but such as our people have always advocated. It is remarkable how these views are gradually working their way among other denominations, and are even maintained and get fresh emphasis by others than Baptists in their latest and best expositions of the Scriptures. It has been my aim, without the use of quotation or footnote, except in a few cases, to make straightforward statement of the latest results of the best scholarship. The trained interpreter and the ordinary reader of the Word of God are at one as to the form of baptism, and almost at one as to the meaning of the ordinance. The common ground of their meeting is where Baptists have always stood.

Baptists have rendered exceptional service in preserving this ordinance as commanded by Christ. But while their view as to form and subject has won its place, even among other denominations, they have now another mission, namely: to make the world see the *meaning* of the ordinance. Our people are in position to do this more effectively than any other people. We stand on middle ground, holding that baptism is "not essential to salvation" in any sense, and yet is of immense import in fulfilling a definite purpose, both as an ordinance in the kingdom of Christ, and a doctrine

in the Christian system. Surely it is a noble mission to set this glorious ordinance before the world, so that all the world may see its meaning; and this is a mission for Baptist people everywhere.

The form, the purpose, the spirit of baptism—these are the three thoughts which need to be emphasized. They are inseparable except for emphasis. They constitute the composite character of this ordinance in the service of God. This book stands for these three elements—form, purpose, and spirit—as essential to the unity of baptism.

## Baptist Faith and Fellowship.

Baptist fellowship was broadened and enriched by the Baptist World Congress, recently held in London. That occasion, with four thousand delegates assembled from the nations of the earth in one spirit and fellowship, was an epoch in denominational affairs. It emphasized the vital unity, strength, and value of denominationalism as consistent with the broadest and loftiest outlook for the cause of Christ. It emphasized the individual Baptist, and the individual Baptist church, without regard for "The Church," and with almost holy contempt for "The Church" idea. Baptists stand for a kingdom, the kingdom of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is their King; they are his subjects.

Their fellowship, starting with individual believers, extending through the individual church and churches, becomes world-wide in sweep, and girdles the earth.

Without ecclesiastical oneness, without formal Creed, or Discipline, or Prayer Book, or any recognized human head or formula, our people have the basis and bond of their fellowship in the oneness of their experience of grace, in the oneness of their baptism, in the oneness of their faith in the great heart-doctrines of the Gospel, in the oneness of purpose in all their vast enterprises for the furtherance of the Gospel and for the complete triumph of the kingdom of Christ. "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion" of Baptists. They believe the book is from God as its Author, and the only authority sufficient for doctrine and life.

They may recite the socalled Apostles' Creed, individually or in assembled thousands as they did in Exeter Hall, but they are much larger than the Apostles' Creed, more definite and distinctive, more purposeful concerning the things of the kingdom of our Lord. Theirs is the unity of the spirit, with one Spirit, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."

Baptists have fellowship in baptism, not only in their view of its doctrine, but in the profounder fact, *that they have been baptized in the one baptism,* obeying their Lord and following where he led the way. Wherever the American, whether of army or navy, wears the uniform of the nation—if indeed he be a true soldier—there is the spirit of comradeship, of fellowship, even of lofty kinship. The baptized have been where their Lord went before, have done the thing which he himself did, have stood where he stood, have

even lain in solemn figure where he was laid. Each can say of his own baptism: "Come see the place where the Lord lay." This is one bond of fellowship, and gives them touch with each other, and a common touch also with their Lord.

## Recalling Your Baptism.

In his address of welcome to the Baptist World Congress, Judge Willis, K. C. of England, as reported in the *British Weekly,* said: "The greatest privilege which a Baptist has is to remember his own baptism—but, alas! for members of other churches, this can never be more than a matter of hearsay!" These simple words from the distinguished member of the English bar were made more emphatic by the occasion, are yet pertinent, and have wide application. They appeal to Baptists wherever Baptists are found, and in whatever tongue they tell the story of the work of grace. They touch a chord that vibrates in Baptist hearts everywhere.

The thought of your baptism may awaken a thousand precious memories, may set going all the powers of the soul in the sweetest music the world ever heard. You recall the experience of grace that went before; you recall the happy associations of that hour; you recall the vows wherein you declared yourself dead with Christ and risen with him, with larger hopes for the future. It is a privilege of distinction, and a bond of strong fellowship that our people can recall that hour,

that solemn yet joyous act, when risen with Christ they set their affections above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. The memory of their baptism awakens the rapturous song in their heart and brings afresh the coronation of their King.

The supremacy of Christ in his churches, in his ordinances, in the affairs of his kingdom, in the hearts of men, was the watchword of that great meeting in London, and is the watchword of Baptists throughout the world. But there is another word, a counter word, and in some respects even more important—the *faithfulness of believers*. For how can his supremacy become actual and effectual in the world except as believers are loyal and faithful? These two words—*supremacy in him and faithfulness in us*—give incomparable strength and exaltation to fellowship and service. In him we live, in him we serve, in him we conquer.

The faithful performance of the commandments of our Lord is the most pressing need in the world today, and gives the most imperial life among men. Herein is his earthly coronation; herein is the conquering aggressiveness of the hosts of God; herein also is the highway to universal dominion for Christ; herein is the sure forerunner of the crowning day that is coming, when Jesus shall reign supreme, and every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father.

AND LO A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, SAYING, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.—MATT. 3:17.

## CHAPTER II.

### MORAL DIGNITY OF THE ACT.

"But John forbade him; and Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. And he suffered him."

THESE simple words between John and Jesus mark a crisis in the course of events then current. The first and second recorded words of the world's great Teacher were words of remonstrance, spoken many years apart. First, with his parents, when they failed to comprehend the majesty of his mission—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and, second, with his forerunner, for withstanding him in the plain path of duty and loftier service—"Suffer it to be so now." Here the door opens to his public ministry, and beyond were the Jordan for his baptism, the wilderness for his temptation, and all that came after in the world-life of our Lord.

Baptism as a physical act is quite ordinary, altogether commonplace—simply the immersion of a person in water; but baptism as a Christian ordinance is altogether extraordinary, passes at once into the sphere of the sublime, and becomes possessed of moral grandeur unsurpassed, possibly unequaled in almost any other human act. As obedience to our Lord's

final command, baptism is the immersion in water of a penitent believer in Jesus—one in whom the work of grace has been wrought—"into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

The Christian world needs a loftier conception of this ordinance, as to its meaning and place in doctrine and life; a conception of baptism that will remove it from the controversial sphere in both letter and spirit. If hitherto we have had to battle for its rightful observance, let us count the victory won, and turn now to behold the glory of this thing which our Lord shows us, and for whose preservation our people have stood through the Christian ages. Such a conception of baptism will at once remove it from the realm of those who deride or jest, and will give it equal rank with its companion ordinance—the Lord's Supper—equal to it in every way, in deepness of meaning, richness and tenderness of sentiment, and equal to it also as resting on the authority of Jesus and foretelling the glory of his coming.

Manifestly baptism cannot be studied by itself as a single act. It has inseparable associations and connections within which lie its significance and moral dignity as an act of Christian obedience. It is itself not a diamond, but only the setting for the diamond, and presents not a solitaire, but a cluster, rich in cumulative and reflective beauty and brilliance. The ordinance is nothing in itself, but takes the significance and greatness of other things; and though shining with borrowed light, yet shines gloriously. It repro-

duces an august scene; is monumental of glorious achievement; represents momentous heart-experiences; is closely related to a stupendous doctrine; and is prophetic of the greatest event yet future.

Baptism in its very nature and form is spectacular—a spectacle to men and angels and God. So is the Lord's Supper. The Hebrew religious service was spectacular on a large scale, approaching sometimes the magnificent and even gorgeous. The Gospel, however, has only two ordinances, and these are so simple and yet so significant as to show the divine touch.

### Reproduces an August Scene.

1. In baptism as showing dignity of the act we do what Jesus did in one of the most august scenes of his life—*his baptism in the Jordan.* Any one naming five or six greatest events in the life of our Lord will almost surely include his baptism, giving it rank with his birth, temptation, transfiguration, his mighty bearing at the tomb of Lazarus, and his garden experience.

The things in his life that appear extraordinary to us were ordinary to the angels, while the ordinary to us was extraordinary with them. We marvel that he calmed the storm and the sea; they wondered that he slumbered and slept in the hinder part of the ship. They wondered that he could lay down his life; we wonder that he could take it again. His resurrection is a mystery to us, but his death was a mystery to the

angels which they desired to look into and could not comprehend.

It is remarkable that he was baptized; that leaving the quiet home of his boyhood at Nazareth and walking some sixty or seventy miles, he should count it worth while and even necessary to seek John and the Jordan and baptism, as the multitudes had done. We rather sympathize with John in forbidding him, and like John also, we perhaps fail to discern the significance of the occasion and the hour to which they had come.

It was a crucial moment when Jesus came to John to be baptized of him in the Jordan. The Son of God sought baptism of a man—to walk in the way appointed for penitent sinners, though he himself knew no sin. God the Father also was there, not visibly but audibly with his word of recognition, approval, and coronation. The Holy Spirit, Third Person in the Trinity, was also present, not audibly but visibly, throwing over the scene the glory which the Son had with the Father before the world was. And as the windows of heaven were thrown open the angels must have looked on in eager wonder.

The most satisfactory exposition of the baptism of Jesus that has come under my observation was from an Episcopal preacher of the Church of England, Dr. Marcus Rainsford, selected by Mr. Moody as chief speaker in the Northfield meeting for the summer of 1886. Some thought that it did not fit the occasion, that it was too pronounced for immersion as the form

of baptism, but it was a sermon of rare merit, of the finest spirit, and great in sweep of thought and expository power.

The preacher described in vivid fashion the Saviour's baptism—"his immersion in the Jordan, his burial by John, and his resurrection from the grave made in the flowing water." He then set out with clearness the meaning of it all, ringing the changes on the phrase, *"plunged under penal judgment,"* as telling the story of its purpose, and showing in figure what he should soon do in fact by his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave. Dr. Rainsford told how on a visit to the Jordan he had walked up and down the banks of that historic stream hoping to stand at the very place where our Lord stood and walked. He moved the great audience by the charm of his words and beauty of his story, until we were lost in the imagination that we ourselves were there—standing where the Son of God had stood, looking on the majestic scene as it passed.

But this privilege is beyond us; indeed, we do not need this, for in our own baptism we have something holier than a visit to the Jordan, something more lofty as we come to do the very thing our Lord and Master did, to go where he went in advance of us, to lie where he lay, to meet a high and solemn obligation even as he did, and catch the approving word from our Father and his.

The glory of his person shines upon the pathway of his earthly career and glorifies whatever he touched.

Childhood became exalted because he was a child. He worked in the carpenter's shop, and ever afterwards labor took on a new dignity. Even the cross lost its shame and became luminous because of his death, and the grave lost its darkness and despair by the wonder and joy of his resurrection. So also baptism, a common act in everyday life, under his appointment as an ordinance and because he had gone that way first, became glorious for all succeeding ages —a sublime act for all who walk in his footsteps in love and loyal devotion.

Here we not only do what he did, but what he did under conditions and circumstances that made his simple act august in heavenly splendor, and our baptism, however humble and obscure, takes on something of the sublimity that belongs to his. It is a solemn and lofty moment in one's life when he comes to this ordinance. It marks a kind of momentous turning point in his life. We are following in the Saviour's footsteps, and our baptism repeats his in form, perpetuates its lessons, marks our obedience to his law and our devotion to his service. This is moral dignity, and gives the ordinance an isolation and character all its own.

### Monument of Glorious Achievement.

2. Our baptism, as showing its moral greatness, is a monument of the greatest event in the history of the world—*the resurrection of Jesus*. It takes to itself,

so commonplace, something of the glory which broke upon the world when by the power of God his Son was raised from the dead. The baptism of Jesus as a figure had a forward look not only to the cross but also to the tomb, not only to the death but also to the burial, not only to the burial but also to his resurrection. When standing midway of his ministry, looking backward and forward—backward to the Jordan, forward to the things yet to come—Jesus declared he had a baptism to be baptized with. We read the wonderful utterance and stop at Calvary, but his thoughts swept on to Joseph's garden and the new sepulcher—"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"

Our baptism commemorates the event to which he was then looking forward, as filling the whole field of his vision. And so the ordinance becomes at once picture and proof of that achievement. You see here wrought out in monumental figure what then took place in fact, when on that quiet morning the angel came down and rolled away the stone, and Jesus rose triumphant from the grave. It is of the very life and purpose of the monument to testify, and its testimony, though silent like the testimony of the stars, goes out into all the earth. And the monument gathers into itself the distinction and honor and renown of the event which it commemorates. So let it be kept in mind that one is baptized for a monumental purpose, and how the simple ordinance yet tells in commemorative way the most wonderful story in all history.

Jesus died on the cross, and so we have the fact of his death; his body all mangled, yet cared for by tender hands, was laid in the new tomb, made fast with the Roman seal and secure by Roman soldiers, and so we have the fact of his burial—no "swooning" or delusion or collusion about all this. On the morning of the third day the world was confronted with a new problem—*the problem of an empty sepulcher.* There it was, open to all, seen by all, admitted by all. But how came it empty? And what had become of the body? The question set all Jerusalem astir, and was answered by each one in his own theory.

The soldiers said his disciples had come by night while they themselves were sleeping, had broken the Roman seal, rolled the stone away, and stolen his body. Peter and John went into the sepulcher at the early dawn of day, saw where the body had been, saw that it was gone, saw the marks of his departure, and then left, John believing that Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter "went away wondering," but later, however, when something radical had taken place with him, and he had seen his Lord, his wonder changed into certitude, and he ever afterwards, and with exultant faith, stood for the resurrection even under terrible persecution. The women also came, found the stone rolled away and the body gone. They were affrighted; then hearing that wonderful word, which may be called the theory of the angels, "He is not here, he is risen; come see the place where the Lord lay"—ran to tell in gladness what they had seen and heard. Mary at

first accepted the theory of the stolen body, and wept in her grief, but meeting her Lord in the garden, broke the stillness of the morning with her joyous Rabboni, Rabboni. The two disciples turning away from the buried Christ, turning away indeed from the risen Christ himself, not even stopping to investigate for themselves the report of trustworthy witnesses, walked out into the world's darkness of despair. But they also met their Lord, or were overtaken by him, felt the charm of his voice, felt that strange burning of heart that comes from the touch of high and mighty word, and then hastened in their return to tell the assembled group that they also had seen the Lord. And Thomas, the last, would not believe, said even in the face of mighty testimony that he *would not believe,* except on personal experience, and carried that unbelief for a whole week as a fearful conflict in mind and heart; but the Saviour found even him, showed his hands and side with look and voice that swept the soul of the man of unbelief, and Thomas burst forth in those words that became the crowning glory of the tragic experiences for the week—"my Lord and my God"—words that to this day have set the music of the world.

## A Commemorative Figure.

That empty sepulcher has its monument, its memorial witness, in the ordinance of baptism wherein we are buried with Christ and wherein we are raised up again to walk in newness of life. In its frequent repe-

tition baptism keeps before the world the mighty problem of the empty tomb, and always with its glorious answer for the resurrection and the risen Christ; declares anew for the resurrection of Jesus; becomes the holy sepulcher, the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; and so takes to itself something of the significance and splendor of that tremendous achievement of divine power. The glory of that first morning is upon every baptism.

The voice of baptism is ever the same, "He is not here; he is risen as he said; come see the place where the Lord lay!" Baptism as an institution, and every baptism as administered, is in itself a monument, and bears witness to the resurrection of Jesus in which God wrought this work for human redemption, deliverance, and emancipation. In baptism it is as though we looked into the sepulcher with the women, or heard afresh the words of the angel, or entered with Peter and John into the empty sepulcher; or like Mary or Thomas came upon our Lord in some new revelation of his risen glory or his condescending love and compassion and tenderness. And so the ordinance has stood a silent mighty monument like the great pyramids of Egypt, and its testimony to this day is unbroken and sweeps down the ages with increasing power.

The evidence in monuments for the resurrection of Jesus is of transcendent importance. In our study of Christian evidences we have not given due consideration to the evidence which monuments give, or taken

into account the force of their testimony which can hardly be gainsaid.

Along the track of the ages God's plan has been to mark the great events through which he worked out the fullness of his purpose, and to leave some monument to commemorate what he had done. There are other monuments than those of stone and bronze and memorial halls and buildings. But they all have a common purpose—namely, to commemorate the person or event or thing for which they stand. Bunker Hill monument is a lofty shaft of New England granite, testifying to the struggle and victory for civil liberty. The Washington monument at the nation's capital testifies of the nation's chieftain, as to his historic reality, his integrity of character, his military valor, his civic honesty and courageous service for his country. Every block of marble in that giant column is vocal with testimony for a life full of splendid endeavor and of heroic achievement in the history of men and nations.

## Memorial Witness for God.

God has not left himself without monument in the world to his greatest achievement in raising his Son from the dead. As monuments with their testimony he gave a new book, a new day, a new ordinance, a new organization—namely, the New Testament, the Lord's Day, the ordinance of baptism, the church as a divine institution. These all in their testimony converge at the empty sepulcher, and all declare for the resur-

rection of Jesus, all point to the risen Christ; indeed, each and every one of them bears false witness unless Christ be risen from the dead.

Passing by the others we here emphasize baptism as a monument, standing foursquare, undisturbed by the storms and conflicts of the centuries, and with inscriptions that tell their own story. There on its very front are the words: To the memory of Jesus of Nazareth; born at Bethlehem; baptized in the Jordan; wrought his life-work; died on the cross; was buried and rose from the dead. Again, on another side of the monument are the words of the angel, "He is risen as he said, come see the place where the Lord lay." And still again as we move around the monument to study its meaning, there are the words: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are raised up with him by the faith of the operation of God." And yet again, as uncovering heaven and earth at one sweep, and setting the high mark of this life and revealing the glory of the life beyond the stars, there are the words: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

There can be no monument except for the antecedent act for which it stands; no passover except for the Hebrew deliverance; no Lord's Supper except for the Lord's death on the cross; no baptism except for his resurrection from the grave. This indeed is the very meaning and power of the monument. There

must have been a Bunker Hill battle, else there could not be a Bunker Hill monument. It is a witness and bears testimony to acts and events that must have gone before.

Our own baptism, as simply an act of obedience to our Lord, has upon it not only the splendor of his baptism, but shines also in the very glory of his resurrection wherein he brought life and immortality to light. This makes the ordinance great in exceptional and exalted character, and justifies the plea for its moral dignity and grandeur. Baptism is for a glorious purpose, and tells the most wonderful story in all the history of the ages.

### Symbol of Great Heart-experiences.

3. Baptism as showing its quality of moral excellence represents the greatest spiritual change possible in human hearts—*that marvelous heart-experience in which one becomes a Christian.* It is very important to understand the outward physical act in its relation to this inner experience. To call baptism a "mere rite" is to belittle the ordinance; to consider baptism in any sense a means or condition of salvation utterly perverts the truth. In either case the ordinance is robbed of its wondrous significance. To say that baptism symbolizes the new birth if true at all is yet inadequate. Baptism is not the new birth, nor in any sense an instrument unto regeneration. It is a symbol indeed,

not however of birth, but of resurrection, representing death, burial, and empty sepulcher.

This inner change expressed in physical terms is commonly called a birth—as being born from above, born unto God, begotten of God; it is also called a change of heart as the inner experience of grace; also a new creation in Christ Jesus; a translation from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son; a passing from death unto life; a being made alive again and being raised up with Christ—a *spiritual resurrection.* These expressions are so many different figures of speech in an effort to describe and emphasize the marvelous experience.

When this experience is considered a resurrection—a spiritual resurrection wrought by the power of God in the inner precincts of the soul—then indeed baptism becomes its outward expression, its embodiment in visible form, and for this reason takes something of its moral character, borrows of its dignity, and shines in its glory. Baptism is not only the public profession of faith in Christ, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, but declares in public action that we have been made alive in him and are now risen with him.

What takes place in one's thought and feeling finds expression in different ways: The orator thinks, and sways the multitude with his thought as expressed in words; the writer expresses his thought on the printed page until it catches the very light from the glow of his mind; the sculptor with chisel and mallet makes

the marble give life-like expression to the mighty conception of his genius; while the artist with paint and brush in skillful touch tells the wonderful story of what is going on in his heart and building in his mind; and the human face is almost like a stringed instrument in giving expression to sentiment and emotions that stir the soul. So it comes about often, that actions speak louder than words.

But here is a marvelous change that takes place in the human heart, is wrought in the spiritual nature of man. One dead in trespasses and sins is quickened, made alive in Christ Jesus, raised up with him and made to sit with him in heavenly places—a resurrection followed by a risen life. We experience this change and know that something radical has taken place. But how, we know not; or how to express it we know not. Whereas we were blind, now we see; whereas we were dead unto God, we live unto him. Oh! how we have been baffled in our attempts to give expression to this work of grace! We sing and are happy; we are happy, and our hearts burst forth in exultant song; but we cannot tell in words the wondrous story. Simple language befits it best, yet the mightiest language is inadequate.

### Revealing Hidden Wonders.

Baptism is the physical expression of this spiritual experience—the picture of what takes place in the soul when raised from the dead. Dead to sin, and so

we are buried; alive unto God and righteousness, and so we are raised up again. Here we come upon the very heart-meaning of this ordinance. Herein is the significance of those utterances: "Crucified with Christ;" "baptized into Christ;" "baptized unto his death;" "buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even we also should walk in newness of life;" "buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God;" "if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." These things are inward, but baptism is their outward expression.

In this ordinance God made a picture of marvelous charm and hung it out before the world that all might see. It shows in figure what God has wrought in fact; uncovers in marvelous way the divine operation in the human heart; tells as no human speech can tell what God has done for our soul. It is only a picture indeed, but a wonderful picture, made by him who made the stars, and declares his glory and shows his handiwork. Baptism shows in emblem almost the very workings of divine power in its secret springs and processes. It goes as far as picture can go in its expression of life and the sources of life. The spiritual finds expression in the physical; fact finds embodiment in figure; and in its very form baptism represents the heart-change, the inner death and resurrection.

Baptism as a picture from the divine hand has also

divine meaning and revelation—a revelation of what God has previously wrought in the soul, wherein he shows "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." So baptism as a symbol is a picture of God's power and its working, first, when operative in Joseph's new tomb raising Christ from the dead; and, second, when operative in the human heart making one alive from the dead. It gets so close to the original that the unthoughtful have mistaken the picture for the original, the visible for the invisible, the action seen in form for the experience had in the heart—as when the marble statue is so finely chiseled that in its very perfection it is taken for the living human form. It is not the original, and yet shines in the glory of the original, and takes to itself the moral grandeur of that wonderful change wherein the dead are made to live.

Two things are manifest:

(1) Baptism from its very nature is only for a class. It can have no significance except for such as have this experience of grace. It is both exclusive and inclusive; *for all who believe, but for no others.* It is intended for such as have repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ; for those who previously become the children of God through faith in Christ. Faith is the royal badge in the royal family, and is the insignia of right to baptism. All

these, but no others, can come to this ordinance. Here qualifications, fitness, a great heart-condition have prior necessity else the ordinance means nothing.

A young lady not a Christian having witnessed a baptism said to her pastor, "I would not let you baptize me for the world." He startled her, however, by saying he "would not baptize her for the world," and then explained how she could not come to the ordinance, for she was as yet unfit for the sacred service. This led to her conversion, and then all was changed, and her baptism was a joy.

(2) Baptism puts one under bond to live a holy life. In its very resurrection there is a prophecy and promise for newness of life to the honor and glory of God. In a lofty sense it is a sacrament—using that noble word not in its theological sense, nor with the Roman Catholic idea, but as the old original *sacramentum,* in which the Roman soldier took oath of allegiance to defend and support the Roman empire. Here the old life is left behind, the new life is begun. The voice of baptism is ever calling in the risen life, that we seek not those things that are on the earth, but those things that are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

### Emphasizes Stupendous Doctrine.

4. Baptism has moral dignity by its close connection with one of the most stupendous doctrines in the Christian system—*the Doctrine of the Trinity.* As an in-

stitution in the kingdom of God, or as a simple act of obedience baptism in every individual administration is covered and crowned with the glory of the Trinity. The baptismal formula used by divine permission and authority brings the Trinity into the act, does honor to the Three Persons in the eternal Godhead—as if to declare the presence of each and so complete the reproduction of the Saviour's baptism, and make ours like his as a copy follows the model. This sacred pronouncement of the three-fold name serves as a very shekinah under the glory of which baptism is administered.

Let it be remembered who comes to baptism. This ordinance is only for the saved, and has neither meaning nor profit for others; let none other venture here; let us dare lead none other into this solemn act. Baptism is worship, and brings us face to face with God in his majesty, and in his saving, sovereign grace; here we stand on holy ground; here we enter into the holy of holies, in the simple administration of the ordinance; here we stand before the burning bush uncovered as to our hearts in this glorious presence, awed and hushed into silence by the simple mighty words and their ineffable import—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—"baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Baptism gets imperial prestige because of its relation to the Trinity—the Trinity both as doctrine in the Christian system and as stupendous fact in the being of God.

This baptismal formula by its one name and three

persons emphasizes separateness and distinction of personality, while at the same time declaring for oneness and Trinity of Being. It pledges faith, obedience, loyalty, devotion to the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three in one and one in three. Persons frequently express trouble in soul at the thought of approaching the Lord's Supper; surely there is reason for care and concern of conduct in following our Lord in baptism. We come this way but once, and our action is momentous in every sense, and becomes a supreme moment in our lives. It demands our utmost care and concern.

### Remembering Baptismal Scenes.

This may well awaken remembrance of the time when you put on Christ by baptism, and may start in your soul sacred memories with the glad song of bygone years. Some of the most charming pictures that hang in memory's hall are scenes of baptisms witnessed at times as the years were passing. I remember well my own baptism. It was a great day in the life of a country boy. It was with the old Cane Run Church, in Kentucky, midway between Georgetown and Lexington, where my father served so many happy years as pastor, and where I found the Saviour and where he first found me. The baptism followed on a Lord's Day in the latter part of November; the skies were overcast with clouds, and snow-flakes were falling here and there. It was in a beautiful pool out in

the open with stately forest trees standing around; the ice was broken to make way for the ordinance; the pastor led his boy along the way their Saviour and Master had gone before, and upon profession of his faith buried him in the open grave and raised him up again in the quiet, solemn act. It was a moment of transcendent glory then, and even now as I look back to it. Years have come and gone; many who looked on and took part in that scene have passed away; change has crowded upon change thick and fast, and yet the joy of that day still rings in the soul, and its memory is as fresh and refreshing as the morning dew.

I recall another baptism that occurred in my first pastorate, among the very first indeed that I had the privilege of administering. It was a scene of interest and exultant joy. A young girl of strong and noble character made profession of faith, and stood as a candidate for baptism. In her home she met with bitter opposition, especially from her father, a man of vigorous, robust nature, and from her older sister, who taunted and ridiculed. But the girl stood fast, and before the day of her baptism came, the father yielded his consent and approbation, while the older sister in a conversion of marked power became a happy believer in the Lord Jesus. The baptism took place in the beautiful Ohio. The day was bitter cold, with ice running in the river, and a thousand people or more gathered to witness the scene. The two sisters went into the water together, the pastor leading the way. The older was baptized first; then the younger fol-

lowed, followed her sister but also followed her Lord, and when raised from the water began singing in quiet, subdued tone that touched the hearts of the great multitude:

Oh! how happy are they,
Who their Saviour obey.

The people caught her spirit of rejoicing, joined in the song and poured out their soul in solemn, joyous praise with the happy girl, radiant in the sense of obedient love:

Oh! how happy are they,
Who their Saviour obey,
And have laid up their treasure above!
Tongue can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.

I shall never forget that scene. It gave me a new vision of the beauty and satisfaction of walking in the way our Saviour led and remains in my memory as one of the most blessed, triumphant occasions in all my pastoral life.

And yet, that occasion was not exceptional. From the days of the Jordan, and of the garden where Joseph's new tomb was, and of the farewell word of our Master, commanding us to walk in his footsteps, such scenes have been repeated over and over again in the history of the world. And the ordinance has lost none of its grandeur, but still stands crowned with glory and honor in the presence of the King, as ad-

ministered into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. I once witnessed an outdoor baptism where the rays of the evening sun fell upon the water at such an angle that the reflection changed the baptismal scene to a sea of splendor, as if Jordan were reproduced in fact, and the glory of the great Three was upon all.

### Foretells the Crowning Event.

5. Baptism as having moral dignity in lofty purpose is prophetic of the greatest event yet future in the history of the race—*the final resurrection of the dead.* This is true of the ordinance, as an institution, and as set out by the Saviour's baptism in the Jordan, and as commanded for all who love him and will follow his example. We have rightly magnified baptism as a *burial,* but have not given sufficient emphasis to *baptism as a resurrection.* It betokens that most wonderful event yet to come; and though simple in itself is yet sublime in the grandeur of that coming scene.

For the sake of emphasis we may designate three resurrections; first, of Jesus as wrought by the power of God in Joseph's new tomb; second, the spiritual resurrection wrought by the same power in the heart dead in trespasses and in sin; third, the resurrection of the saints when Christ shall raise them up at the last day and shall change this vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body according to the working of his mighty power. That final resurrection is

clearly and wonderfully marked in the word of God; for example:

> "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live; Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth. They that have done good unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."

These are perhaps the stoutest words ever spoken by our Lord, and yet clear as the noonday sun for the future resurrection of the dead. This Scripture manifestly sets out two resurrections, one spiritual being wrought in the heart as we have already seen, the other physical having the body as its subject; they are each a veritable resurrection with its separate, individual experience and event; the one is now current, while the other is deferred until the last day; one is marvelous in our eyes, the other more marvelous, but both equally true; both are wrought by the same power and promised by the same words; one is both forerunner and guarantee of the other. Both have their expression and symbol in baptism—a picture of the one already wrought, a prophecy of the one yet to come.

The severest test of faith, as we look back, is the resurrection of Jesus, and as we look forward, is the resurrection of the dead. But this simple ordinance, standing as the counterpart of the word of God in the boldness of its utterance, is at once the challenge and declaration of our faith—our faith in the past event, our expectant faith also in the event yet future. God

has given us this ordinance and endowed it with marvelous meaning, and here it stands between the empty sepulcher in the garden and the disrupted grave at the last day—monumental of the one, and prophetic of the other.

### Redemption of the Body.

The final resurrection is the consummation act in human history. All things are now converging to that event. Christ's word is the resurrection promise and power; Christ himself in his glorified estate is the resurrection model and pledge. We shall see him as he is, and be like him; we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly. Like Adam now, we then shall be like Christ.

Things impossible under one set of conditions become easy and natural under other conditions. In my home city, for example, one says as he sits with his family at supper time, he will breakfast next morning in Atlanta. That is impossible, says another; and so it is impossible, "a physical impossibility," for there are three hundred miles between Nashville and Atlanta, with rivers and mountains intervening. But stop, you have not taken into account the N., C. & St. L. Railway, nor the preparation which has gone before—the roadbed, the rails and tunnels and bridges, schedule and mighty engines and well-equipped trains. With these all in, the thing is easy. You retire at Nashville, slumber through the night, and as you awake with the coming of a new day, and look out from the window

of your rushing train, having covered all the intervening distance with its rivers and mountains, you are entering Georgia's beautiful capital. What before was impossible has become under changed conditions not only possible, but easy, natural, almost necessary. With God in the creed, with his word of promise and power and purpose and pledge, all difficulties of the resurrection are amply provided for. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that *God* should raise the dead"—whether of Lazarus four days dead, or of Jesus three days in the tomb made doubly fast by Roman authority, or of the dead whose bodies have been under the dominion and desolation of death these many, many years? "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of the body." There will be no failure or disappointment.

That mighty event has only one emblem or foretoken; baptism as a picture stands all by itself to foretell the coming glory when the grave shall give up its dead. Both nature and art abound with symbols of death, but not in the whole field of nature nor in the whole range of art is there a single picture of the resurrection. Not the chrysalis with its new-life, for the worm was not dead; not nature bursting into new life when touched by the vernal sunshine and shower, for nature was only sleeping. There is a wide difference between slumber and death. And baptism typifies a resurrection of the dead into life.

Baptism though a single act shows a double picture —an immersion, but also an emersion; a burial indeed,

but also a resurrection. Baptism is God's voice crying in the wilderness that the dead shall live again; the forerunner of that louder voice of the angel and the trumpet-call when the dead shall be raised from the grave. Christ in many places has given his promise that the believer in him shall be raised up at *"the last day,"* and when that day comes his word will be redeemed. And with the redemption of his promise comes the redemption of the body—*its resurrection at the last day.*

### Its Voice a Prophetic Voice.

Baptism is prophetic, and in its very nature declares the resurrection is not yet, but shall come. It is at once the voice of the past, and also of the future. Looking back baptism, as we have seen, reproduces the Jordan where our Lord was baptized, and commemorates the tomb in the garden where he was raised from the dead; looking forward also to that crowning event in human history when the dead shall hear his voice, it tells with boldness that the believer shall awake in his likeness and follow him who was the firstfruits. Stand here and look on this simple act of baptism, and listen to its sublime utterance while shining somewhat in the glory of that coming day for which all other days were made. See that grave open in the water, whether pool or running stream; newly made as you look on; now filled in solemn, painful burial; now made empty in the glory and joy of resurrection. Here

God is speaking in formal action what he has said so plainly in written word. And the language of this noble ordinance is ever the same throughout all times in declaration of expectant faith and exultant hope. The everlasting word of the Master is heard in this simple ordinance: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; I will raise him up at the last day."

*Baptism says*: "Behold, I show you a mystery; the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

*Baptism says*: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise."

*Baptism says*: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Baptism as if making mockery at the long unbroken triumph which death has wrought in the world is the chorus of the resurrection song: "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Oh this wondrous, wondrous voice! This voice from the water-grave, as it opens before our very eyes, then receives its subject and closes, while all is hushed and still, and then gives up its dead for a new life to the honor and glory of God!

I believe the voice of the monument as it testifies for the resurrection of Jesus; I believe the voice also of this prophecy for the future, foretelling the resurrection of the dead. Here this simple ordinance becomes sublime, and is covered all over with the glory of that day when the cross shall make way for the crown, the grave for the throne, death for life and immortality. As the mountain lifting itself above the darkness of the valley, catches the first rays of the morning sun, so this ordinance standing through the ages and telling the wondrous story of the past, shines also in the coming glory of the resurrection so beautifully foretold in its simple form.

### Resurrection in Fact and Figure.

And so *resurrection* is the key word in the study of this ordinance—the resurrection in fact and figure. In fact, the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection wrought in the heart, the resurrection wrought at the last day. In figure, baptism stands for these mighty events in human history and experience. Their glory becomes its glory; their sublime character gives it moral standing and dignity. It wears upon its very brow the crown of faith and hope; with it destroyed,

or even marred, there is no figure to show in visible form these wonders wrought and to be wrought by divine power.

It is of tremendous moment that God has appointed this institution as an ordinance in his kingdom, charged it with such wonderful meaning, and set it at the very threshold of the new life, as almost its first manifestation. And to us is committed the high and holy trust of preserving its integrity as it came from his hands. Its claim upon us is imperative, if we will follow our Saviour's example, and keep his commands, and preserve inviolate our sacred trust.

It is "the answer of a good conscience," and brings peace and satisfaction in the sense of doing what God commanded. The renewed conscience, quickened and made pure by the Holy Spirit, utters again the word of the Master at the Jordan, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," and baptism is our answer to that high call—the answer of a good conscience. And as in solemn obedience we follow Christ in his appointed way, walking in his steps, upon our baptism as an individual act rest the glory of ages past and the glory of ages yet to come.

## CHAPTER III.

### BAPTISM OF JESUS IN THE JORDAN.

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

"And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

"And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark 1: 9-11.)

IN the simplest language the evangelist here relates one of the most remarkable events in human history. No word of ours can add to its simple grandeur. Here we may pause and uncover in the sublime presence, wondering what it all means while we hear him calling, "Follow me," as he passes out through the Jordan from his private life to his public ministry.

That Jesus should be baptized is itself a simple fact though of startling wonder, and all the more since he took pains to come from his home in Nazareth and seek baptism at the hands of John, and then was baptized in the Jordan with such circumstances as are here related. And yet the chief feature in that august scene, the most remarkable part of it all, was Jesus himself, with his quiet, commanding and even lofty

conduct—that Jesus should be baptized of John in the Jordan as the multitudes had been. This must ever remain an extraordinary event in his wonderful life.

When the angels made announcement of his birth at Bethlehem, their startling word was, unto you is born a Saviour, *Christ the Lord*—the marvelous paradox that *the Lord is born,* born of woman, made under the law, a little lower than the angels. The prophet's word of forecast, given out hundreds of years before Bethlehem with its manger and marvels, was: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." The apostle's word of historic record several years after, was: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh, and dwelt among men, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

This Person, this Being comes from Nazareth, comes to John, comes to the Jordan, comes to baptism, and comes with marked emphasis and significance. And in that scene we behold *Christ the Lord baptized*—immersed in the Jordan by his forerunner who came to tell of him as the mightier One. And the heavens were opened, and the angels looked on with wonder, and the Holy Spirit descended dove-like, shedding his glory round, and the Father gave his word of approba-

tion upon his well-beloved Son—his Son well-beloved in this act of public obedience.

## The Ordinance Made Great Forever.

1. *The baptism of Jesus emphasizes the importance and exalted character of baptism.* What place does this ordinance hold in your mind and heart, in view of that great event in the life of our Lord? There are two opposite tendencies, and each has its advocates. The one says baptism is a "mere rite," a "non-essential," of little or no consequence, belongs "to things external, and we give ourselves to things internal and spiritual." And then the ordinance is belittled or neglected altogether, and one counts it a small matter to leave undone the thing which Jesus commanded and in which he set the high example for us to follow.

The other view holds that "baptism is essential to salvation," and is therefore "a saving ordinance." This view has been an immense evil and peril in the past. It has appeared in different forms; now holding baptism as synonymous with regeneration or the chief instrument in working this great heart-change; now as the act of obedience in which salvation is won as a prize; now as a condition of pardon and justification. It is not easy to record the evils which have come from this view. It is, however, not accepted by many people at this time, especially in its grosser forms as in the centuries gone by. The danger to the ordinance comes now from the opposite view—from counting the ordi-

nance of no consequence at all, that one can do as he pleases about it—let it alone, set it aside, mar it, substitute it, or even hold it in derision.

The baptism of Jesus stands in striking contrast to all this, and should awaken our attention and enlist our sympathetic study. He was without sin, and his baptism was not for salvation; he had no sins to be "washed away" in the Jordan; his baptism, and ours like his, was in no sense a means of salvation, nor a condition of pardon, nor essential to salvation. And yet the ordinance has unspeakable emphasis from the fact that he was baptized; that he counted it worth his while to come to baptism; that such wonderful and even glorious conditions marked his coming to John and his immersion in the Jordan; that here he opened a highway to all who would come after him, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it.

This should give forever an exalted view of the ordinance, especially when this great event in his life is connected with two other facts—viz.: that he himself set baptism as an ordinance or institution in his kingdom and listed it among the commandments set for our obedience. That Jesus was baptized and opened a highway for us should appeal to the heart; should draw us after him, and save us from any word or spirit that undervalues baptism, and should make the ordinance our gladness and joy. Listen to his farewell word: Lo, I am with you, when you go preaching, when you make disciples, when you baptize, when you teach my commandments. He opened his ministry with the

words, "Suffer it to be so now," and in the presence of the other two Persons in the Trinity was immersed in the Jordan; and then closed his earthly ministry with the word of command that we baptize "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," as if intending to reproduce the glorious scene of the Jordan and so keep his lofty conduct ever before the world.

### The Pattern Set for Us.

2. *The Baptism of Jesus sets a pattern for our baptism as to its form.* Ours may not be in the running stream, or even out of doors, as was his; but if modeled after his, it must be baptism—an immersion in water as he was immersed in the Jordan. John was sent of God, and was sent to baptize. His baptism was from heaven. He received it not of men, but of God as to its subjects and purpose and spirit and form. God had given him a pattern, even as he gave Moses a pattern in the holy mount, and that pattern stamped with the divine signet was passed down to those who came after, and made permanent in the kingdom of God—with this word, that we preserve its subject and purpose and spirit and form. There may be some distinction between "John's baptism and Christian baptism" in the way of growth and enlargement of meaning, but there is no difference in form.

The best learning and scholarship of the world have settled four things with marked agreement and beyond all peradventure: (1) That the word baptism means

immersion; (2) that the baptism of Jesus was an immersion in the Jordan; (3) that this word baptism is what Christ commanded, and describes the practice of his disciples in New Testament times and for many centuries after; (4) that any departure from this form, on whatever ground the change may have been made or is now justified, is a departure from the original form and pattern and practice.

Christ set the pattern in what he did, and commanded the form in what he commanded—an immersion in water. And no human power or authority can change the form or break the pattern without doing violence to his word and example. Every one who reads the Scriptures can read this for himself. And the conclusion of learning and scholarship is also the conclusion of devout hearts in their reading and common sense interpretation of the word of God. If there were "different modes of baptism," then his choice should be our glad choice, and hush forever the spirit and claim that it "makes no difference."

In the study of the life of our Lord there has not been sufficient attention given to the scene of the Jordan with its wonderful meaning—possibly because it leads into the sphere and perhaps even into the spirit of controversy. Many have been the students and much has been published of that wonderful life among men, but scant indeed has been the attention given his baptism. There need be no controversy in our study of his baptism; neither must there be retirement of that august scene of his life, either through fear of

controversy or through fear to face the pattern which that day he set before the world for all succeeding ages. That will work violence to truth in many ways. A Presbyterian woman, relating her misgivings as to her own baptism and her desire in reading the word of God to know and follow its teachings, when asked what she did with those passages which speak of baptism, said: "Oh, I skip them." That is dangerous concerning any Scripture, and is a record of fearful self-indictment.

Reference has been made in preceding chapter (page 18) to Dr. Rainsford's sermon at Northfield on the Baptism of Jesus. He was almost the chief speaker that year, and was heard on many subjects, and always with pleasure. The audience consisted of preachers and other earnest Christian workers and students of the Scriptures. One morning at the appointed hour Dr. Rainsford read the third chapter of Matthew's Gospel, commenting as he read and setting the scene of John's baptism before his audience with wonderful power. Coming to the baptism of Jesus, he paused, laid down his Bible, and making that his subject, preached a powerful sermon. He insisted, and even argued, that Jesus was immersed; that his immersion had fundamental doctrinal significance; that it foretold the death on the cross and the resurrection from the grave and emphasized their meaning in the scheme of redemption.

His audience followed him through, but he had not gone far before one could see that many of them had

pushed aside their note books which they used day by day in recording the lessons of that truly great meeting, as if they cared to make no record either of that sermon or of the marvelous scene at the Jordan where our Lord formally began his life among men.

In the afternoon a group of preachers were discussing the sermon, when one of them, a Presbyterian, censured the English preacher, who was an Episcopalian, "for violating the courtesies of the occasion and introducing a subject of controversy into an interdenominational meeting where Christians of all names were united in the study of God's word." But he was reminded that there must be something wrong with the religious meeting in which it is out of place to introduce any event in the life of our Lord, especially so great an event as his baptism. The addresses and sermons of that meeting were taken down in shorthand and published in a book, including those by Dr. Rainsford—all of them so far as I can now recall except the one on the Baptism of Jesus. The spirit of the audience was the spirit of John, and forbade it; the spirit of the preacher was the spirit of the Master—"suffer it to be so now."

Controversy has its evils, and has wrought untold harm to truth and Christian character and to the progress of Christ's kingdom. But so has indifference to these great matters which for the most part are the subject and occasion of these contentions. We may well avoid the controversy, but not at the sacrifice of faithfulness in following the Master. We must pre-

serve unmarred the pattern or form of baptism which has come down to us from the Jordan.

A good woman of the Episcopal Church once said to me: "Of course Jesus was immersed, everybody believes he was immersed. But that is no reason why I should be immersed." That is a fearful blunder. There has been some discussion as to whether Washington was baptized, and if so, where and how; also as to whether D. L. Moody was baptized, and if so, where and how—as if the action of these great men could determine our conduct in a matter so important. What they did is of little concern to us. The supreme thing as to our baptism is that we follow the pattern of our Lord, doing the thing which he commanded and the thing which he himself did. His baptism as to its form should settle forever the form of our baptism.

### Foretold Death and Resurrection.

3. *The baptism of Jesus foretold in emblem what afterwards came on Calvary and in the tomb of Joseph.* There is a tradition that our Lord, on one occasion in the workshop at Nazareth, after his day's work, straightened and stretched himself up with his arms extended, and that the evening sun caught his form in this position and cast the shadow of a cross on the wall behind him—as if foreshadowing the cross towards which his whole life was moving. However that may be, it is certainly true that with his baptism in the Jordan there fell on him and on his life the

shadow of the cross that never lifted, but rather deepened and darkened until the awful reality came.

With the Jordan in mind, and looking out upon what was yet coming, he uttered those words so full of pathos and resolute purpose, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He saw two mighty events as a second baptism, his death on the cross and his resurrection from the tomb—an overwhelming in suffering, and then a burial and rising again. It likewise was the subject of his talk when he met Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration. The glory of that occasion made luminous the shadow that was upon his path and that would not lift.

His baptism in the Jordan, like the believer's baptism, was an emblem and a prophecy. It foretold his death and burial and resurrection. It meant burial preceded by death, and then life again from the dead; that he would die, but could not be holden of death. It was a twofold act—on the one hand the utmost humiliation, on the other triumphant joy.

Jesus foresaw in his baptism what we can easily and almost necessarily see from the unfolding of his life and from the development in after years of the doctrine of the cross and the doctrine of the empty tomb. The prophecy of his baptism, like all prophecy, is best understood and interpreted in its fulfillment—when prophecy becomes history.

We must study his baptism, therefore, in the light of after events, and can easily discern its deep signifi-

cance in foretelling his death as the sinner's substitute, and his resurrection as deliverance for all who "believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." And we cannot separate his baptism either from his death and resurrection, or from the meaning of those mighty events as they were expounded by the apostles when led by the Holy Spirit into all truth. His baptism led the way and foretold all that came after both for himself and for all who should be redeemed through him.

> Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried and on the third day rose again according to the Scriptures; was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; he was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification; while we were yet sinners Christ died for us; we are justified by his blood and saved from wrath through him; we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son and even much more saved by his life—his resurrection life, his work of atonement; he who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This doctrine so clearly and abundantly taught in the word of God, Christ carried with him into his baptism. The heart grows warm as we think on that wondrous scene, and what to some may be but the event of a passing day, becomes to us surpassingly glorious in its tremendous import and its august simplicity.

His baptism declared in advance what he would do in order to become the sinner's Saviour; and in his

baptism he declared himself one with believers, as in their baptism they declare themselves one with him—their baptism being not the bond, but the emblem of the bond, of union with him. We are buried with him by baptism into death, and raised up again to walk in newness of life—one with him, sharing in his death as our substitute and in all that it brings to the believer, sharing also in the joy and glory of his resurrection. And the claim of the great apostle may become the claim also of the humblest believer: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Our baptism says that in the retrospect; but Christ's baptism said that in the prospect.

### A Commanding Lesson.

4. *The baptism of Jesus was an example of lofty obedience.* Baptism is form, but more than form. We insist upon the form because the form is essential to the act. But there is much besides of utmost importance. The spirit and purpose must go with the form. We must not separate them lest we get a corpse instead of a living, healthful body. The form is of worth and significance only because of the life and spirit and purpose which are within.

That great day at the Jordan Jesus led the way for all that would follow him. He set a pattern for the

form, but also a pattern of noble purpose and spirit and commanding obedience in all things. He made no distinction in either mind or life between laws essential and laws unessential, or between acts of more importance and less importance. "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." . . . Law was law with him, and obedience on his part, solemn observance of the thing commanded and confronting him, was the only thing he considered.

This is a large and noble lesson in obedience, and we need to learn its fullest import and to walk as he walked in the things commanded. His obedience included and even emphasized the form of baptism, but was much larger, more comprehensive, more commanding. For while his baptism set the form of baptism for all succeeding ages, and while it was full of lofty purpose peculiar to himself and to his act, yet it went further than form, further even than purpose, and gave the world a noble exhibition of the spirit of obedience. This underlay all else, putting life and power into the purpose, worth and beauty into the form.

Our baptism must match his, not only in the pattern he set, but also in the purpose and the spirit of his act. Our baptism like his declares his sonship; declares his death, burial, and resurrection; declares also our union with him and our sonship through him; declares the old life gone and the new life begun. The spirit of our baptism, matching his at least in part and kind,

is threefold—the spirit of obedience, the spirit of loyalty, the spirit of worship. It is of supreme importance that one should be like Christ in character, but hardly second to this in importance that one should be like him in life, in words and conduct. Imitating Christ is well, but being like him is infinitely more. In his baptism he has set us a glorious example of inner and outer life, of character and conduct, of spirit and form. His spirit of obedience lived in the form; the form was made glorious in his purpose. His baptism was the form of godliness in the fullness of the power thereof.

At the close of Dr. Rainsford's sermon at Northfield, already referred to, Dr. A. T. Pierson led in prayer, and in earnest words followed the preacher's thought and exposition. One person at least in the audience thought within himself, that if Dr. Pierson be true to the spirit and words of his soul-moving prayer, he will surely follow his Lord in baptism. And the Christian world knows that this afterwards came to pass, and the man of prayer followed where his prayer led, and was baptized as his Lord had been baptized. That was the spirit of obedience—the spirit that must reign supreme in the heart, commanding our life. It was this same spirit of obedience that caused Mr. Spurgeon, the great London preacher, to break away from his early training and to walk seven miles in search of a preacher who would baptize him as Jesus was baptized. But why talk of what others have done, when here

before our very eyes, as the end of all controversy, is what our Lord did and what our Lord commanded?

## Rightly Estimating Obedience.

There is danger lest we fail to give sufficient emphasis to obedience, or fail to see obedience in its larger sweep and fuller meaning. Baptism, because it does not save and is not essential to salvation, is counted a "mere rite," an "external," or "only a command," and is fearfully undervalued and even suffers neglect as an ordinance in the kingdom of our Lord. Baptism as Jesus was baptized is essential to obedience, and obedience required baptism of him and requires baptism of us. It is not a question of salvation, but whether one will obey his Lord and follow him in his lofty example. To obey is better than sacrifice, and is of commanding worth in the eyes of the Lord, and of momentous consequence in the life.

Here our Saviour in the fulfillment of his mission gives us an example of obedience, and commands us to follow. His obedience was larger than his baptism, and yet included and emphasized and glorified his immersion in the Jordan. That was only one act, but it was in sublime harmony with his incomparable life. His obedience in baptism was typical of the obedience in his whole life. It was his master passion; his consuming thought. "In the volume of the book it is written of me, I come to do thy will, O God." It was his meat and drink. It carried him to his first baptism,

and then to his second baptism wherein he was straitened in soul during his entire life. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. This was the keynote of his great mission, and is the same whether heard in his words at the Jordan or in his dying groans at the last.

He gave us an example in obedience, and passed the great principle to his followers: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." This is the way he went before us, and is the highway of the King. Throughout his life he was under the profound and powerful sense of inner compulsion. "I must," was supreme with him, and gave majestic movement in all he did. But we must not mistake his earnestness for the sorrowful or even the somber. His face from the first was set as though he would go to Jerusalem, and throughout there was the dominant spirit, the consecrated purpose and resolute action, but joy also in the things set before him. His first act was at the Jordan, and so in this first act was sounded the word of obedience, and also the controlling policy of his wonderful life.

## The Strategic Point in Life.

And this first word was a triumphant word, as he opened the way to conquest. He shows at the very first the stronghold of his character and life, uncovers

the very elements of power by which he is to win his victory. What brought him to baptism at the first brought him to victory in the end. His spirit of obedience, so beautifully illustrated at the Jordan and so active unto the finish, was his masterful power of conquest. As with him, this is our victory and our great reward. Following his example in the high and noble sense is the sure way to the crown. It is of immense importance, was for Christ and is for us individually and for our people, that we hold this strategic point of obedience in the service of God. Obedience to him is the unconquerable and the conquering. Following his example means victory and safety and everlasting joy.

In describing the battle of Waterloo, Victor Hugo gives a heroic picture of Wellington at a crucial point. All day he sat his horse under a great elm on the little hill which was the strategic point on all that bloody plain and the key to the terrific battle that was raging. It was a fearful moment for the soldiers of England and her allies. The roar of small arms and the thunder of cannon were breaking over him while the bloody carnage went on. The balls rained down upon him as hail from the driving storm. There he sat, anxious but impassive, frigidly heroic like a statue of iron, holding the destiny of Europe in his hands. Gordon, his faithful aid-de-camp, had just fallen, shot down by his side. Another officer pointing to a bursting shell near by said with nervous energy: "My lord, if you allow yourself to be killed, what are your instructions and what orders do you leave us?" "To follow my

example," said Wellington. Then to still another officer Wellington said: "Hold this spot to the last man!" And then the iron duke passed down the thrilling word to his iron regiments: "O, my men! We must not be beat; what would they say of us in England?" And later, when the fight had become fiercer, "We must die on the spot we now occupy." That is what made Waterloo and turned the destiny of nations; the holding of that strategic hill.

Those who have given their hearts to Jesus Christ and pledged their allegiance to him are in the midst of real and terrific conflicts. They have also their strategic point in the battle, their key to the situation, *and that point is obedience to Christ*—simple, straightforward, persistent *obedience to their risen Lord;* an obedience not only in baptism, not even beginning with baptism, but in baptism surely, and also in doctrine and character and conduct and all Christian endeavor. The words of Wellington in an infinitely higher sense are the words of our Lord: "Follow my example"—"we must hold this place at any cost." He who fails here, or abridges here, cannot count himself safe. Baptism is in no sense a condition of pardon or a means of salvation, but is an act full of lofty import, one which Christ has commanded and in which he led the way while all heaven looked on and set an example for all who would follow him. We must not fail here. What will be said of us in succeeding ages—what will be said of us beyond the stars? It is not a question of salvation at all, but rather of what comes

with salvation, the higher, larger question of love and loyalty and devotion in keeping his word and following his example. On this act Jesus himself set the seal of his mighty word, and in his own baptism left an imperial precedent. Christ's life was a life of obedience. He magnified the law by keeping it. It was the passion of his soul. He found his meat and drink in doing the will of his Father. Doing the will of God is the royal badge in the brotherhood of believers. "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," said our Lord, and pressed his way to the Jordan. And his baptism gave an everlasting emphasis to the importance of obedience, not only in baptism, but also in all things.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5: 19.)

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." (Matt. 7: 24, 25.)

"I will follow thee, my Saviour,
Wheresoe'er my lot may be;
Where thou goest I will follow,
Yes, my Lord, I'll follow thee.

I will follow thee, my Saviour,
Thou didst shed thy blood for me;
And though all men shall forsake thee,
By thy grace I'll follow thee."

## CHAPTER IV.

### JESUS BURIED IN JOSEPH'S NEW TOMB.

"When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed." (Matt. 27: 57-61.)

THIS was the end. The career of Jesus had been brought to an abrupt and cruel close. He had been crucified on the cross by Roman soldiers acting under orders from the Roman court, which in turn was moved by the Jewish authorities. They had their way, and things went as they wanted. Jesus was dead. While living he had not where to lay his head, and now having been put to death, his body is laid in a borrowed tomb. But was this the end? Did death end all with him? Was that sepulcher, newly hewn from the rock, the terminus of that wonderful life he had lived among men? If so, the universe might well have put on mourning forever.

The story of the Gospels is followed up to this point by friend and foe with hardly a question of their credibility excepting a futile effort made here and there to eliminate the supernatural. But if the Gospels are genuine and true in what seems the natural and

ordinary, so also they must be genuine and true when relating things extraordinary and beyond our comprehension.

The death and burial of Jesus followed his baptism in the Jordan by about three years; the one going before as a figure and foretelling in advance those events which were to come as facts in the course of working out his lofty purpose. On that dark day when he died on the cross and was buried in Joseph's tomb, the prophecy of the Jordan was fulfilled in part and passed into history. The account of his death and burial is simple enough. To believe that he died and was buried—to believe these things concerning him simply as facts in history, is indeed easy. And yet this belief is the basis and almost necessitates the belief in the larger event that was to follow, and sets aside much of the foolishness and falsehood that has been written in denial of his resurrection on the morning of that third day. The Jordan, the cross, the sepulcher, are the three things here combined. The baptism in the Jordan had cast its shadow before; its perspective as yet was incomplete; its word of prophetic vision was fulfilled as yet only in part. It was night, but there hung on the horizon a star—the bright and morning star that stood like a sentinel waiting for the coming day. It was the word he had spoken while yet alive.

### His Death a Real Death.

1. His burial verified and emphasized the fact of his death. His baptism in the Jordan had said he would

die and be buried; now he is dead and in the tomb. Here are two facts of immense importance in their bearing on what would come after, and especially in a critical study of the question of the resurrection. Both of these facts were foretold not only by his baptism in the Jordan, but also with the plainest speech in the teachings of our Lord. His death simply as a fact, and his burial simply as a fact, are the things here emphasized as coming within the scope of this discussion.

It was a part of God's great scheme of human redemption that he should die; it manifestly came within the power of Christ himself, and within the purpose of his plan, that he could and would and did lay down his life; men played their part, and in wrath and frenzy and wickedness crucified the Son of God. Roman power and Jewish hate joined hands that day to bring on the end, and were successful. But there was a masterful hand overruling all and directing everything according to the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" and while God was at his best giving his Son to die for a lost world, man was at his worst putting him to death who came to save.

The story of his being crucified, as told by the four evangelists in language so simple and sincere, leaves no possible question as to his death being a real death in the fullness of the meaning of that awful word. The horrors of the crucifixion; the conduct of all who had anything to do with it; the unutterable anguish of soul manifested in those words on the cross that were spoken by the kingly victim while in the agony of

death; that driving in of the spear which found its way to his heart already broken in the bitterness of his sorrow, letting out the blood and water from the open wound; the official report from the Roman soldier to Pilate and Pilate's surrender of the body to Joseph; the condition of his body when it came into the hands of his friends and their preparation of it for his burial and their laying it away in the new tomb—all these things, each one by itself, and of course much more with all combined, show beyond every possible doubt that Jesus was dead when taken down from the cross. And if he were dead, *then he was dead.* And the theory of his having "swooned" as an offset and explanation of his resurrection is utter folly—as foolish as it is false, absolutely contrary to the plainest facts, and out of keeping with the whole course of events then current.

The significance of his death, the doctrine of the cross, its place and meaning in the plan of salvation, though not in the scope of this discussion, confirms and emphasizes the fact of his death. He died for our sins, taking the sinner's place as the sinner's substitute; shed his blood for the remission of sins; became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him; died the just for the unjust, that God might still be just while justifying him that believeth in Jesus. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and the believer in him is crucified with him and again made alive with him. His death on the cross is at once an inexpressible sorrow and inexpressible joy

—herein we died with him, with him also we live again. He laid down his life as a voluntary vicarious sin-bearer that we might live in him. Our largest hopes are born of the world's most awful tragedy, and of the darkest and most desperate hour in the experience of men. The sight of the cross is the unburdening of the sinner's soul. The personal experience of its saving power is the greatest joy ever known. "He loved me and gave himself for me."

I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
He fixed his dying eyes on me
As near his cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt;
It plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And helped to nail him there.

A second look he gave, which said:
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I die that thou mayest live."

"Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator." "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." "He is the propitiation of our sins." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

His death was the sinner's life; in the shedding of his blood there was fulness of remission. We are following facts in the course of events. We emphasize

the cross first simply as an awful fact, and then as having wonderful meaning.

### Death Made His Burial Necessary.

**2.** What to do with his body—now that he was dead—was a pressing question. His enemies who had brought him to the cross would gladly have disposed of his body according to the custom of the day for those who were put to death as malefactors. This would have frustrated God's plan and purpose at its crucial and supreme point. For his burial was both fact and factor, having its place in prophecy, also among the events then coming to pass, and as making ready for the mighty consummation of his work. It was necessary that he should go down under the water at his baptism in the Jordan for the uplifting again in sublime emblem. Likewise his burial was also necessary—not only to dispose of his lifeless body, but also in course of the movement toward his coming from the tomb. The emblem is sure to find its reality. His disciples did not see this at the time, for it is never easy to interpret a storm while in the midst of its raging fury. They simply knew he was dead and met the emergency. It was a simple service, but of immense importance, finding mention by all four evangelists. They all tell of his crucifixion, and now they all tell of his burial. Matthew tells it; Mark tells it (15: 43-47); Luke tells it (23: 51-56); John tells it

(19: 38-42)—each in his own way and with more or less fullness of detail. But with each of them he found a burial place and was buried—buried first in the Jordan and now in the garden.

Joseph of Arimathea was the one man to serve in this trying moment. He had the position and the means and the place and the heart to meet the exigency. Perhaps the word *borrowed* should not be used in connection with the new tomb in the garden. And the word loan is hardly strong enough or large enough—especially when read in the light of later events. With Joseph it was a gift—this sepulcher hewn out of a rock, made for himself and wherein man never lay—a gift of love and the one thing of dire necessity at the time. And Nicodemus came also with his spices for embalming the body—the same who had sought the great Teacher by night to hear his wondrous words. These two disciples have been censured for what is called timidity or cowardice, the one simply because he went to Jesus by night; the other because he had not made public his faith in Jesus or "taken a stand" among his disciples. But this act so generous and heroic should forever clear them of any such charge and give them high rank among those who love our Lord. Others were there also and helped. Never was there more love and tenderness in a burial, nor more earnest and faithful devotion. They all saw where the body lay; saw the great stone rolled to the door of the sepulcher, and then departed in their sor-

row and gloom and despair—their love alone remaining steadfast.

### The Tomb Made Doubly Secure.

3. His enemies completed the work. They made the tomb sure, and put its sacred treasure under safe-keeping.

> "The next day, that followed the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.
>
> "Command, therefore, that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first.
>
> "Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch." (Matt. 27: 62-66.)

This incident explains itself. It occurred on what we would call Saturday morning after the body had been in the tomb since Friday evening. It is the work of his enemies who would not be outdone or thwarted in their purpose by his disciples. It gives wonderful emphasis to the reality and genuineness of his death, and adds immensely to the thoroughness of his burial. Friend and foe agreed in this, that he was dead and in the tomb. The one had no expectation of a resurrection notwithstanding the oft-repeated word of their Lord. The other had strange misgiving and fears, and were determined the tomb should not be disturbed and the body should not be removed. The disciples

had no heart or purpose to take the body away; the seal and guard made it absolutely impossible. The tomb was as sure as sure could be, and the body as safe as safe could be. The enemy meant ill, but overreached himself, and the incident turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel. It makes the empty sepulcher when it comes more difficult of explanation. It shows how absurd and absolutely impossible are some of the theories devised by the learned critics in their desperate effort, even in the latter days, to set aside the resurrection and to account for what took place on the morning of that third day.

We close this chapter looking on the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; within Jesus lay dead, and his body under the dominion of death but to see no corruption; at its door is the great stone sealed with the seal of the Roman empire that no man would dare touch; without and keeping watch are the Roman soldiers, who make it safe against all intruders and would-be robbers.

### The Prophecy of His Baptism.

The end had come. The Jordan having gone before was the figure, the new tomb of Joseph was the reality. His baptism first of all was a burial, but burial means death. The story of the Jordan thus going before when John laid him beneath the water of the sacred stream was the story first of the cross, then of the sepulcher in the garden. Its prophetic word has come to pass—he is dead and his body is in the tomb. Will

there be any further fulfillment? Did the Jordan have no message of hope?

The darkness that settled on the world while he was dying had passed away. But a denser, deeper darkness was upon the minds and hearts of those who loved him. That Friday night—oh, what a night it was in the world's history! And the disciples—where were they? Joseph who furnished the tomb and Nicodemus who furnished the spices for burial—position and wealth waiting upon our Lord in dire necessity—where were they, and what must have been their thoughts? And John and Peter and the faithful women and all the rest—where were they, and who can describe or even imagine their feelings? And all day Saturday—as it slowly passed, what a day it must have been in the calendar of those who loved him and had waited on his ministry! With them all was darkness and despair; there was no hope of a resurrection, no thought of a resurrection; that word on the cross—"It is finished"—was to them a word of utter despair and sounded the death knell of all their hopes.

The powers of darkness have their day, and death reigned as king of the empire. There was no rainbow over the sepulcher where the dead lay. Yet God had said he should not be holden of death. The Son himself had said he had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again. But these portentous and potential words were forgotten and went down as part of the awful wreckage—much as now concerning our dead and the darkness which comes over our homes.

So while the Roman sentinel keeps watch before the sepulcher with the great stone at the door sealed with the Roman seal, we pass into Saturday night and the stars take their place in the heavens and wait for the third day.

### Out of Darkness Into Light.

"'Mid silence and death lay Judea that night,
While the Mightiest slept in the tomb!
On low-lying plain, on the mountain's proud height,
Hung the pall of despair and of gloom.

"Wail, winds, to the sea! Earth's Deliverer is dead,
They have slain the one hope of the world!
Quake, hills, to your base, for the demons have said,
'From his throne Heaven's King we have hurled!'

"Ah! sad one and weary! toil on in thy woe!
He is dead who could give thee release!
On, sinful one, on, in thy restlessness go;
He is dead who could say to thee, 'Peace!'

"But, lo! there's a flush in the ominous sky,
The deep rose of dawn is unfolding:
From the listening earth to the glory on high,
Thronging angels the scene are beholding.

"Back, back, roll the stone! Shout, ye hosts of the skies,
Lo! the Conqueror of death and of doom!
From the silent profound in his might see him rise,
Clad in deathless, unchangeable bloom!

"He lives! We shall live! Tell it, voices of Spring!
Breathe it, flowers! Sing it, birds, as ye soar!
Creation, unite in the praise of our King!
Yea, He lives and he dieth no more!"

## CHAPTER V.

### PROBLEM OF THE EMPTY SEPULCHER.

ON the morning of that third day the sepulcher was empty. The body of our Lord had been prepared for burial with delicate tenderness, and laid away with great care by his friends, while his enemies had made the sepulcher fast and sure. There was absolute security from disturbance by any human power—to the satisfaction no doubt of friend and foe alike. And yet the disturbance came, the seal was broken, the stone was rolled away, the body was gone, and the sepulcher was empty. Whence came the disturbance and how came all this? That is the mightiest and most imperial question in human history. It has been under the search light for nearly two thousand years and has developed but one answer—the resurrection of Jesus. This alone can account for all the conditions, explain all the facts, and answer all the tremendous demands of the new and startling situation.

In the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan there was first an immersion—his being put under the water in symbol of death and burial; then there was an emersion—a lifting of his body from the water in symbol of rising again. No one saw him as he lay beneath the fast flowing stream, but he was seen by the multitudes as he went up out of the water to enter upon his life

mission. Thousands saw him lay down his life as he hung upon the cross; but no one saw him when in the tomb, or when the glory broke in from the further side, or when in the supreme, crucial moment he asserted his power over death and the grave in taking up his life again. He came forth triumphant as the conqueror. The baptism was prophetic in its action; the baptized Christ symbolized the risen Christ; and now the figure had found its fact. The voice of the Jordan was heard in the empty sepulcher and beyond the sepulcher. And the prophetic symbol of the Jordan found its sublime reality.

Full discussion of this great theme is not contemplated or required by the scope of the present purpose. And yet even the symbol of his baptism demands that we account for, (1) the missing body, (2) the empty sepulcher, (3) the risen Christ, and (4) the marvelous change so speedily wrought among the disciples; a change from fear, disappointment, absolute dejection and despair, to rapturous joy and a courageous boldness that knew no bounds. It was as if at midnight the sun should suddenly break forth in the splendor of noonday. A distinguished critic and opponent of the resurrection gives his credence to the genuineness of the narratives and to the sincerity of the disciples, and confesses in his explanation of their conduct that "something remarkable had certainly taken place." Matthew in his narrative tells what had taken place:

> "And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and

rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. . . . And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you." (28: 2-7.)

This was a break in the world's night, the undoing of darkness, and gave the world a new morning. It was the overthrow of death and the ushering in of life and immortality. The hour of redemption had come, the appointed hour in the economy of grace, and the powers wrought their work. When God's messengers appear on the scene with commission to raise the dead, the resurrection becomes easy, all difficulties stand aside, and the grave is empty.

## Face to Face with Fact.

1. Each of the evangelists brings us face to face in his narrative with the *tremendous fact* of the empty sepulcher and absent body. And then their explanation, more tremendous if possible, is the risen Christ. The coming down of the angel explains easily the breaking of the Roman seal, the removal of the great stone and the disruption of the tomb, while the risen Christ himself is ample and glorious explanation of the missing body, and of the empty sepulcher, and of the sudden transformation of the disciples, and of the

mighty spiritual power which that event has held over the hearts of men from that day to this.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine the order of events on that first day, especially in the early morning hours. But this is not necessary. And yet starting with the dawn of that first morning one may follow on till he sees the Risen Christ finish his risen life on earth and ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high, leading captivity captive.

(1) His appearance to the women. (Matt. 28: 8-10; Mark 16: 2-11; Luke 24: 2-12, and John 20: 1, 2, 11-18.)

(2) Peter and John within the sepulcher. (Luke 24: 12; John 20: 1-8.)

(3) The testimony of the Roman guard who watched at the sepulcher. (Matt. 28: 11-15.)

(4) The walk to Emmaus. (Luke 24: 13-35.)

(5) His appearance to the disciples, first with Thomas absent, and then eight days later when he was present. (Luke 24: 36-47; John 20: 19-22, 24-29.) And somewhere, most likely among the first events of the first morning, he appeared at one time to James and then to Simon Peter.

(6) Meets his disciples at the sea of Tiberias while they were fishing. (John 21: 1-25.)

(7) His appearance to five hundred disciples at once. (Matt. 28: 16-20; 1 Cor. 15: 6.)

(8) His ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Mark 16: 15, 16, 19, 20; Luke 24: 49-53; Acts 1: 9-11.)

This is the record—the historical record. And no other forty days in the world's history were so crowded with such transcendent scenes and incidents. As told by the evangelists the record is genuine and sincere and trustworthy and accredited. They relate the most marvelous events in the simplest language possible, making no effort at effectiveness, but resting simply in the consciousness that they were telling the truth. Their record is the most marvelous document in the world's literature. None has been so severely tested or is more impregnable as being the simple truth about the mightiest of facts.

### The Historic Basis Impregnable.

2. The empty sepulcher and his risen life give the historic basis for belief in the resurrection of Jesus. These are facts well authenticated. The resurrection may be considered as a doctrine in the Christian system, or as a moral power in the world's thought and experience, or simply as a fact in history. These three can hardly be separated except for discussion and emphasis. In either respect it is of tremendous import. First and foremost it must be fact, otherwise all else comes to naught.

(1) In our inquiry as to its truthfulness the basal point, the starting place which all can test is the empty sepulcher; the simple fact that it was empty on the morning of that third day. No investigation is complete or trustworthy that does not account for the dis-

appearance of the body and the empty sepulcher. And right here at this basal point every effort at explanation must fail that will not follow and account for the historic narrative of the evangelists.

(2) Every other question comes back to this as the first and basal question, Was the grave empty and was the body gone? And everything in the narratives answers in the affirmative without break or shadow of doubt. It finds confirmation even in the testimony of the Roman guard. They said the body, left in their charge, was gone, and that the grave under their watch was empty—and then perpetrated a brazen-face falsehood in explanation. Their falsehood is manifest, but their testimony remains in harmony with all the facts. The empty sepulcher baffles the unbeliever, while it is the believer's joy. Here the investigation starts, but it does not end here.

The risen Christ himself is the glory of the resurrection and its convincement. Here is the impregnable basis for our belief. The historic Christ whether before or after the resurrection is the incomparable and unanswerable. Those who have seen him and felt his power will never question. How quickly the empty sepulcher was either forgotten or made luminous in the glory of the resurrection! The women, even Mary weeping in the garden, cared little for the sepulcher, when they had met the Lord himself. Peter and John went in and inspected the place where the Lord had lain, and went away, the one wondering and the other believing because of what they had seen, and yet all

that took second place when they found themselves face to face with the risen Christ and talked with him. Those two disciples going off to Emmaus had given up everything as lost, were so utterly undone that they would not even listen to the startling reports that began to stir the city, but the risen Christ intercepted and rescued them, and so they returned to tell that they had seen the Lord. And Thomas, the most persistent of all in his unbelief, would not believe upon testimony, even trustworthy testimony, but in the vehemence and despair of his disbelief, demanded physical demonstration, personal touch and experience, yet when he saw that matchless form with the awful marks of the cross still upon him, was swept as with a mighty cyclone in the depths of his soul, and uttered words that have come ringing down the centuries—"My Lord and my God!" This was the end of all controversy, and the disciples stood a unit in their belief—a belief that had quickly passed into knowledge—that Jesus the Lord had risen from the dead—a knowledge that could not be shaken.

What a wonderful change had come in their condition of heart and mind, and also in their conduct toward the world, toward the resurrection, toward even the risen Christ! Eight days after the empty sepulcher was found, every disciple of the Lord answered the mighty problem with the risen Lord—slow enough of belief to show there was no hallucination wrought upon themselves or others, and yet quick enough and radical enough to mark their belief and joy as the

greatest change that ever occurred with so many men in so short a time. They knew he was dead when laid in the sepulcher, and they knew also that he was alive and was among them, their Lord as of old, with other and larger and mightier powers. They never wavered from this. Their faith was never shaken, and yet by it they have shaken the world—and made all the world wonder.

### Maintaining Unbroken Consistency.

3. In his risen life Jesus developed a distinct and marvelous resurrection condition and method. The changes which had come were consistent with what had preceded, indeed were an addition and outgrowth of what had gone before.

In his person and character and condition there was, from his birth at Bethlehem to his ascension from Olivet, a gradual unfolding—each advancement confirming and being in accord with its antecedents. From beginning to end there was the utmost consistency and accord. If there be an exception to this, the exception is his death—his death not as seen by us in the light of after-events, but as taken in relation to the mighty sweep of events, current in those three years he walked the earth and rooting themselves back as they did into his wonderful birth.

Why should this man die? Nay, how could this man die? Considered at his birth, at the Jordan, in his masterful conquest in the temptation, in his fre-

quent and abundant casting out of devils, in his manifest power over disease and death even in aggravated forms, in his glory of transfiguration, in the perfect ease with which he wrought his miracles of words and works, he was beyond and above death—with all having gone before, his death is apparently the one single discordant note in the song of his life. "He saved others, himself he cannot save;" "Let him come down from the cross and we will believe in him"—these words were hurled at him in derision, and yet were but the demand that he maintain in that awful hour the consistency which had reigned supreme throughout his life. Why stand death off from others by the wave of his hand, and still be impotent for himself in that dreadful moment? *Not only why, but how?* His death and his being held under the power of death for a period are the most difficult of explanation of anything in his whole life. This was the wonder of angels.

And yet there is another side to all that. Conditions which make that one discord add charm and power to the music of his life. He had said with masterfulness and calmness, that he could lay down his life, that he had within himself the power to die; that no man could take his life from him, but he would lay it down of himself in working out his mission to save; that wicked men would lay violent hands upon him and put him to death; that while legions of angels awaited his call, he would of himself go upon the cross and lay down his life. His death as we see it now was the

irresistible onward march of events which were still under the guiding of his own hand and made to work out and complete his own plans.

He said, furthermore, that he could take up his life again, and *would* after he had once laid it down; that he would rise again; that he would meet his disciples afterwards at appointed place and time. All this came to pass, and his resurrection and risen life are in complete harmony with those years when he had lived among men, working his works of wonder and speaking words full of marvelous meaning.

Great changes had come, and yet he was the same—no break in his personal identity, no loss but rather gain in power; showing in his risen body the first-fruits of the resurrection—his resurrection being the pledge of the believer's resurrection, his body the model and pattern of their risen body. He walked with them; they walked with him, saw him ascend into glory, and then turned to fill the world with the story of his doctrine.

### Natural and Supernatural.

4. The supernatural cannot be eliminated from the life of Jesus. With that gone he is no longer the historic Christ. It enters in as a very part of himself. Indeed the supernatural sphere, the sphere of miracle, was verily his natural sphere. We wonder that he rose again; the angels wondered that he could die. But the

resurrection with them was the easy, natural, inevitable thing.

Natural and supernatural are but relative terms. The down and the up depend on where you stand; depended on where Christ stood. He was at home in the supernatural. All nature did his bidding, whether wind or wave or loaf of bread or firkin of water or blighting disease or decaying death or raging devils—all heard his voice alike and did what he commanded. His resurrection verified and confirmed all his other claims, and is largely the key to his character and life. It is easier to believe in him with it than to believe in him without it. The world will believe in Christ risen from the dead, but not otherwise.

The supernatural in his life may be presented in the figure of an arch with its five parts—on either side a base, an uprising arm, and then the key-stone that makes it fast. Here in the life of Jesus we have one base the miracle of incarnation, the other base the miracle of resurrection; in the arch, on one side the miracle of his works, on the other the miracle of his words, and in the key-stone the miracle of his character, on which all depends and by which all is bound into one symmetrical and immovable whole. Here rest the hopes of the world. No one part can stand by itself; no one part can be removed without the breaking and destruction of the whole. He began his life in a miracle that made the angels sing, and closed his life in a miracle that lit up all the others with a crown of glory. This arch made of these five miracles, in con-

solidated mass, has withstood all assaults, and can never be broken. It has stood the joy and song of his people for ages past, and will stand for ages yet to come.

### Setting Baptism for the Centuries.

Before ascending on high, and with larger purpose and promise for the future, the risen Lord sent his disciples on their life mission, and gave them this final word: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." *Baptism is placed here,* not as chief part of course, and yet as distinct and distinguishing in a marvelous way, and is crowded with memories that must forever hold it in lofty conception. In his commission and command to all who will be loyal to him, he reproduces the Jordan and projects his own baptism into succeeding ages by the baptism of believers. Oh, it is wonderful and forever crowns baptism with renown and glory that in this supreme moment, Jesus unites it with his own baptism in the Jordan, sets it as a permanent memorial rite for observance by his disciples, and connects it in august majesty with the Trinity, and gives it the promise of his personal presence when we walk his ways and keep his commandments.

His baptism and ours have their meeting place, their

common ground in his resurrection—the one foretelling, the other commemorative of the empty sepulcher and of the risen Christ. The one as a prophetic forecast was full of his resurrection as a sublime story of the future, the other as a monument shines in the splendor of that achievement of God's grace when he raised him from the dead. And the glory of the resurrection and of the risen Christ is upon the baptism of every believer.

The ordinary is given the exceptional and commanding position of the extraordinary. During his lifetime his miracles for the most part had a human and even physical basis—human eyes received sight from the divine touch, human bodies were made whole, and human dead were made alive, while water from the earth was made wine, and nature's elements of wind and sea were silenced in their fury by the divine word —the natural being the basis for the work of the supernatural. And now in sending his Gospel abroad he appoints this simple ordinance—the baptism of believers, their immersion in water—and gives it a marvelous place in his kingdom. He gave it no mystic or spiritual power of any kind, nothing whatever of efficacy for saving or helping to save. And yet he makes this physical act sublime in spiritual meaning. The natural is again made to bear the message of the supernatural. In this ordinance as emblem he sets before the world forever what he wrought in the tomb on the morning of that third day, making it the herald and memorial picture of the mightiest of all his mira-

cles. His baptism had told that it was coming; our baptism tells that it came, and for all succeeding ages stands for the empty sepulcher, sublime in the splendor of his resurrection. "The dignity of this act was worth the audience of kings and princes," and has had the audience of angels and of those higher than angels.

It is of manifest importance that we hold these matters as he placed them. That final word was the word of command. The Great Commission is the law of his disciples, and holds within itself the whole life and mission of his churches. He himself has set baptism in its place. To think what he thinks is the highest thinking; to do what he has commanded is the highest living. Otherwise we could never be sure we are right. In the Commission he commands us what to do; in the Jordan, by his own lofty act, he gave us an example what to do. Having given his law, he went on high, and left its fulfillment with those who love him.

## CHAPTER VI.

### BAPTISM AND OTHER MONUMENTS.

HERE baptism holds a distinguished place, and as a monument commemorates and certifies the resurrection of Jesus. It does not stand by itself, but holds high rank with others as monumental evidence. Here the ordinance is magnified, and its moral dignity becomes conspicuous and commanding. It stands in the renown and glory of that wondrous achievement of our Lord when he triumphed over death and the grave. In lofty character and purpose it appeals to the heart and mind, and asks for a holy place in our thoughts and affections and in all our talk concerning it. To miss this view of baptism is to utterly fail in rightful conception of its meaning. The sight of its administration is as if we looked again into the empty sepulcher, while the baptized believer stands before all the world as a living voice for the risen Christ.

#### All True or All False.

1. That Jesus rose from the dead the disciples had what they considered "many infallible proofs." Their infallible proofs have come down to us, not only not weakened or impaired in any way, but rather strengthened through the centuries in cumulative and invin-

cible power. Certifying his own resurrection beyond all peradventure and himself the risen one, Jesus gave "commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1: 2, 3.)

This wonderful statement is fact or false; true in its fullness, or altogether false. There is no middle ground in this momentous issue. The disciples were not mistaken; were not deceived—neither self-deceived nor deceived by others. All of them, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, and all the rest, separate and together, either tell the truth or bear false witness. Either Jesus rose from the dead, or else as one said, speaking for all, "We are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ." And their character, itself a moral miracle and stupendous wonder, verifies and gives impregnable support to their statement. Falsehood here, from these men and concerning such a matter and leading out into a life that must forever be the charm and wonder of the world, is an absolute impossibility. They told the truth; they knew they told the truth; their testimony stood and could not be shaken, sealed sometimes by death, and always by the noblest life; and their final word was "now is Christ risen from the dead."

Moreover, as another issue, if this be not true as a historic fact, "if Christ be not risen," then all else comes to naught—absolutely, and the wreck in the

moral domain is complete and universal; while a fearful and enormous break is made in the world's history that is beyond repair. It is easier to believe in the resurrection of Jesus, with its tremendous antecedents and concomitants and issues, than to cancel the two thousand years of history that lie behind us, stretching back to the empty sepulcher and on beyond to that awful display of death on the cross and still beyond to that wonderful life among men.

The resurrection of Jesus must first *be history,* else it can have no doctrinal character and its spiritual power in the world cannot be accounted for. And this spiritual power, so prevalent and mighty today, so operative and cumulative in energy through so many centuries and throughout so many countries, remains unexplained and inexplicable. And yet it demands an explanation. Any investigation of the resurrection must account for the *moral power of the resurrection,* as well as for all other facts, whether in the open lives of men or in their spiritual experiences. What one knows as a heart experience is a manifest *fact,* and must be catalogued with other facts, and must be accounted for. In the experiences of men succeeding one another through the ages, there is an unbroken chain—every link of which demands explanation—reaching back to those first disciples in that first week, to the empty sepulcher and the risen Christ. This might itself be put down as monumental evidence for the resurrection of Jesus, though it hardly comes within the scope of the present discussion. And yet any full and thorough

investigation of this potent question in history must include and account for *all the facts,* if the inquiry be philosophical and the answer scientific.

## Put to the Severest Test.

This is an age of investigation. Everything far off is tested by the telescope as if searching for the very home of the stars, and even the very throne of Jehovah itself. Everything near at hand is put under the microscope, and the thing infinitely small is made to tell wonders more difficult of belief than either the invisible God or the resurrection of the dead. All literature and all history are put under the search-light as if to clear away everything that is fancy or fiction, and leave nothing or have nothing, except that which is fact and that which is truth. This is the spirit and work and purpose of the day.

And yet, after all this, some things are settled and fixed—unmoved and immovable. And in every sphere, fact and truth are not only verified, but remain in everlasting steadfastness. Christ's person and character and life and death and resurrection are first and foremost historical matters, and so come within the sphere of historical inquiry and investigation. These all stand or fall together; they are true throughout from the manger to the empty sepulcher, or true not at all.

He himself is a glorious reality in the drama of human events. His resurrection from the dead is a reality—not a myth, not to be compared with myths;

not a "philosophical hypothesis" as a working basis for investigation, though it serves well for such a purpose when honestly used; not a mere theory or speculation in any sense, but to be listed in a class altogether and radically different; simply a fact, and the most stupendous fact of the ages. Christ himself is the one incomparable person in all history, and his resurrection the crucial point in his character and conduct and teaching and plan of human redemption.

And nothing in human history has been so severely tested, and nothing more thoroughly or certainly attested. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables." These things are true—by the verdict of the centuries and by the world's best investigations. Niebuhr, who invented the "critical method" in the study of history, turned his method on the Gospel story with a kindly but faithful and steady hánd, and came out of his investigation with the sunlight on his brow, and declared in the presence of the king of Prussia: "I will lay my head on the block for the divinity of Jesus."

Great events in history have left their monuments, sometimes in stone, more frequently otherwise. Herbert B. Adams, Professor of History in Johns Hopkins University, writing about old William and Mary College, in Virginia, declares: "Institutions of learning are after all nobler monuments to great men and great events than are obelisks or statues of marble." Institutions which men have builded are their glory and their witnesses forever. They tell the truth from one century to another.

The resurrection of Jesus as an event wrought itself indelibly and inseparably into the history of the ages, *and left its monuments,* not in granite shafts, but in something more enduring, something more telling on the generations as they come and go. These monuments are found in institutions which Christ ordained and which remain with us to this day. They are his witnesses, and their testimony may be used and known by all men.

### Naming and Emphasizing the Monuments.

2. The monuments to be considered. These four meet the present purpose: the New Testament, the Lord's Day, the Ordinance of Baptism, and the Church of God. They commemorate the resurrection of Jesus and furnish an unbroken line of monumental evidence for separate and distinct study. They stand along the highway over which the march of history has come, and lead back inevitably to the open sepulcher and the risen Christ. The word *Christian* is one of the most powerful words in the whole range of human speech. Even in its most corrupt forms and in the most fearful looseness of its usage, the word yet retains its heart-meaning and stands for Christ and the things and the persons who are his.

### The New Book.

(1) *The Christian Scriptures—the New Testament.* —This is a monument in literature, and its evidence is

documentary evidence. Prior to the resurrection there had been the Hebrew Bible, corresponding to our Old Testament Scriptures. With the Jews it was sacred, holy, scrupulously guarded, and their highest authority in the settlement of religious questions. But here is a *New Testament,* not contradicting or opposing the Old; not removing or superseding the Old; but simply an addition, completing and fulfilling the Old. The Old and the New, though independent, are wrought into one book—the Book of books. It is a historical fact, a literary wonder, a document which commemorates and testifies and certifies. It is full of the resurrection of Jesus. This wondrous story is the burden of its song. Had there been no empty sepulcher and no resurrection, then there had been no New Testament; the resurrection explains the existence and power of the New Testament. It is a monument of the event—a monument in writing—and here is its inscription:

> "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; he was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures. He is risen as he said. Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept. And was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead."

Had the story of the Gospels ended where Renan ends his Life of Jesus, and Lew Wallace his charming story of Ben Hur, without a resurrection or a risen Christ, then the world's night had been a night without a dawn. And what is more, the story would have been incomplete and inexplicable. Eliminate from its

pages all reference to the resurrection, and what a book you will have! In its mutilation its light and life would go out. It would be a dead book forever. It would not have lived to this day. Indeed the world would not believe or receive the New Testament did it not tell of that wonderful morning when Jesus rose from the dead. As a monument it is not hoary with age, but is luminous in the glory of that far-off event. And its evidence is monumental evidence, confronting the student of history and demanding to be heard. Its voice will not be hushed—a living book speaking for a living Christ.

### The New Day.

(2) *The Christian Sabbath—the Lord's Day.*—The Jews had their Sabbath. It was ancient and memorable and sacred. But there came a change. The old day was superseded by a new day—Saturday by Sunday. The old disappeared before the new as the morning star goes out before the rising sun. The first day of the week became the Lord's Day—the lordliest of all the seven. Christians, both Jews and Gentiles alike, accepted it as their day for celebrating their Lord's resurrection from the dead. On that first day of the week they found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty, and then met him in his risen glory and power. Eight days later, marking the first week in his risen life, he was with them again, crowned as their Lord and their God. And ever since the day has been memorable, returning every week and repeated one hundred

thousand times in the course of the years. Its commemorative significance may be traced along the centuries until now on this day songs of praise for the risen and glorified Christ can be heard around the world.

The resurrection of Jesus as a mighty event in the world's history made a change in the world's calendar —gave to the world a new date, to an old day a new glory. The Lord's Day in the world's dates means the Lord's resurrection in the world's history. And so it stands as a monument of that achievement, and here is its inscription:

"Christ died for our sins, and rose again the third day for our justification."

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.

"As the women went to tell his disciples, Jesus met them saying, 'All hail.'

"In the Spirit of the Lord on the Lord's day."

An ordinary day in the week becomes forthwith extraordinary in its significance—a monumental day with monumental testimony of this mighty work of God's grace, as the first Sabbath was monumental of God's creative act in the completion of creation. The first was glorious, the second excelled in glory.

## The New Ordinance.

(3) *Christian Baptism—the Immersion of Believers.* It is a monumental ordinance, commemorating three acts—death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God.

The Jews aforetime had their ceremonies and ablutions. But these as a vesture were laid aside and God

sent John to *baptize*. In answer to that high call Jesus himself came and was *baptized* of John—immersed in the Jordan. And later he commanded his disciples to *baptize,* and to be *baptized* as he himself was baptized. He appointed two ordinances, only two, and remarkable for their simplicity—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both of them are memorials—each a separate, distinct monument bearing its testimony to events concerning our Lord. The supper is a memorial of his death, of the shedding of his blood, of the cross in its awful expiation for sin, and is observed in memory of him as his Testament written in his blood.

Baptism also testifies for his death; is a memorial of his dying on the accursed tree, but goes further. It stands for the cross, but also represents the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; is a memorial of his burial and his resurrection. Herein is the glory of our baptism. This is almost the chief, if indeed not altogether the chief, office of baptism—to tell this wonderful story of how he died for our sins and was buried and rose again and is alive for evermore. And every baptism from that day to this has served the same lofty purpose, when the believer is immersed "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

So baptism is a monument with monumental evidence of the resurrection of Jesus. Here is its inscription:

> "He was crucified; he is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him; come, see the place where the Lord lay. We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by

the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Baptism holds a distinctive and almost pre-eminent place among the monuments in its pictorial testimony for the resurrection. Like the new book and the new day, baptism gets monumental character from being an ordinance ordained by Christ and remaining unto this day. But it goes beyond the others, because of its striking pictorial, spectacular resemblance to the very act which it commemorates. It is, wherever and whenever repeated, as if another burial and resurrection were accomplished before our very eyes. In the ordinance of baptism the stupendous fact comes face to face with its sublime figure. The one is the original, while the other is its picture—as if a photograph had been taken on that first day of the week, and passed down the centuries, showing us again the empty sepulcher and the risen Christ. Here we have an *immersion,* emblem of all the horrors of death and burial from which the human heart shrinks; here also we have an *emersion,* emblem of his rising again from the dead in triumphant and rapturous joy. Two pictures in one; here a burial scene with a song of sorrow and a wail of anguish; but there an outburst of joy, while a splendor from on high lights up the scene.

It is beyond mortal man to make a rite at once so simple and yet so marvelous in figurative meaning and illustrative power. What is said by words in the Book and by the weekly observance of the Lord's Day, is said in baptism by its pictorial representation of being

buried and of rising again. And while baptism lasts the resurrection of Jesus cannot be denied. Destroy baptism and you have destroyed absolutely the only picture of that glorious event. Though the other monuments should remain to bear testimony, there would be no spectacular exhibition of what took place when he was put into the grave and when he came out again the conqueror of death. Nothing else can take its place, and its testimony can never be hushed. It appeals alike to the eye and the understanding.

How quickly baptism came to its sublime place among the things of the kingdom, following our Lord's resurrection and his ascension on high! What a day Pentecost was for the ordinance! Peter in his great sermon had seized upon the very heart-meaning of the ordinance and held it up as representing in a figure the one single thing that could bring remission of sin—the blood shed on the cross. Three thousand believers were that day baptized as their risen Lord had been before them. And from that day downward along the line of the centuries the ordinance has held high rank wherever men have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and sought to do his will and keep his commandments. And every baptism is both witness and picture that he died and was buried and rose again.

### The New Institution.

(4) *The Christian Church—each separate body of believers.*—The Christian Church is the fourth in the

line of these monuments. The word church is here used in its narrowest and yet broadest and most definite sense; the individual local church which Christ builded and endowed with organic life and organific power. As when the Scriptures speak of the church at Jerusalem, the church of God at Corinth, the church at Antioch, the church of God at Ephesus, the churches of Asia—each one separate, distinct, individual, complete within itself, as if there were not another on earth.

It has power in marvelous way to reproduce itself, and from the first until now has multiplied after its kind, spreading from country to country; it represents constructive Christianity, and stands also for all the Son of God stands for, and is sent with the lofty mission of making his name known among the nations of the earth.

Each church as Christ equipped and endued it, is self-propagating and self-projective. All life comes from antecedent life, and has the promise and potency of future life. Each church since the first original comes from antecedent churches, and has the promise and potency of future churches—as the acorn falling from the oak has the promise of other oaks.

This church is the same, or is intended to be the same, in every community, and everywhere stands for the same things. It is thoroughly unique in doctrine, in membership, in its ordinances, in its lofty mission, with Christ as its one head and sovereign. It serves as a monument to commemorate what he was, what he

taught, and what achievements he wrought among men.

It was a new organization, thoroughly new from first to last. It was not here when Christ came, but he left it here when he ascended on high. It was not the remodeling of something that had been; not the putting of new wine into old bottles or of new cloth into old garments; it was essentially and radically different from Judaism, which was in no sense a church.

Christ committed his church to his disciples and to the ages—a new institution with new membership, new conditions of membership, new ordinances and offices, a new mission and work. It commemorates the resurrection of Jesus; gets its inspiration and power from that glorious achievement, and bears testimony—throughout the ages has borne unbroken testimony—to the risen Christ. So much so that a devout and learned German rationalist (Kiem) has said: "It is upon an empty tomb the Christian Church is founded." This is true as a statement of fact, though not true as he meant it. Had not the tomb been empty on the morning of that third day, then the church would not have been builded; and had there been no risen Christ, there would have been no church then, and much less now. As an institution, visible, material, majestic, the church of Christ in the world today is a monument to his resurrection and the expression of his life and power and glory. Here is the inscription:

"The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." "To whom also he showed himself alive after

his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

### Their Value as Positive Proof.

3. These monumental institutions are witnesses. They are not exceptional in God's economy. He leaves monuments to commemorate his own wonderful works, not always but frequently. Creation itself is a monument to his creative act; he smote the builders of Babel and commemorates his act in the confusion of tongues; the passover feast, as a memorial of the passover night and passover event, was a mighty witness for God, and for that wonderful event in Hebrew and Egyptian history; the display of his awful power at Sinai has its monument forever in the Ten Commandments; in the Lord's Supper he set a memorial of the cross and of the death of his Son for the sins of the world; and when he raised Jesus from the dead and set him at the right hand of the Majesty on high, the glorious achievement found its monument in Christianity and the institutions which he ordained and which remain to this day. And so they give evidence, singly and combined, that as a simple matter of history Jesus died and was buried and on the third day rose again.

Memorials, whether on paper or stone, whether feast day or holiday, whether ordinance or institution, are witnesses whose testimony cannot be broken. Monu-

ments are evidence of the things or events or persons whose memory they perpetuate. The event first, and afterward the memorial. Indeed the monument is the event cast in a mold, fixed and transmitted to succeeding ages. Monuments on great battle-fields in this country and throughout the world would not be there if the battles had not been fought. Monuments erected in memory of men would not be there had the men never lived and wrought their deeds of renown. Back of every monument there must be some event or some man which it commemorates. Back of every institution there is first a man, and then men, and then its founding, and then its being perpetuated and made vital and powerful. As Professor Adams says: "Institutions of learning are after all nobler monuments to great men and great events than are obelisks or statues of marble." This is a common principle everywhere recognized as true, and well-nigh absolute and positive proof which demands consent and acceptance alike for men and events and institutions. And the principle must hold good concerning these monuments as proof for the resurrection of Jesus.

### Evidence Cumulative and Convergent.

Our own national history furnishes a striking illustration. The fourth day of July, 1776, was a memorable day at Philadelphia and among the nations of the earth. It saw the birth of a new Republic. And

forthwith, as if setting its testimonials in monuments for all coming years, a new document appeared in the world's literature—the Declaration of Independence; a new day was entered in the calendar, celebrated and celebrating—the Fourth of July; a new symbol appeared among the symbols of the world—the Stars and Stripes; a new nation itself appeared as an organic power among the kingdoms of the world—the Western Republic whose name and fame have covered land and sea after more than a hundred years of history-making. These four things serve as monuments to that event, and their testimony is cumulative and convergent to that day when the colonies were made one, and a new nation took its place among the nations of the earth. They give monumental testimony, and their evidence is demonstrative proof. And until they can be expunged from the world's calendar, and until the history of more than a hundred years in the life of the Republic can be undone and blotted out, it would be folly and madness to deny the fact of the Declaration of Independence.

So with the monuments that testify for the resurrection of Jesus, as an event further back in the world's calendar and more ancient in the world's history. These four monuments—corresponding somewhat to those certifying the Republic's birth—the New Testament, the new Sabbath, the new Ordinance, the new Organization, demand a new event of mighty power in the world's life. Their testimony sweeps back through the years and through the centuries, all the

while symbolizing and converging, and centers at the one glorious achievement.

They converge with accumulated power to one person, to one event, to one single point in the world's history; they converge to Christ, the worker of mighty works, the teacher of wonderful words, who confessedly died on the cross and was buried in a tomb made doubly sure against all intrusion; they converge to the sepulcher confessedly found empty, his body having disappeared; they converge to the *risen Christ,* evidencing and certifying himself by his reappearance among his disciples, alive in his former body, bearing marks of the cross, but marks also of new power and of a new life more glorious even for him. This evidence, cumulative and convergent and centered, demands the event for which these monuments stand. And without the resurrection of Jesus these monuments would never have been, could not have been.

### A History of Their Own.

4. Their own history augments immeasurably the power of their evidence. These institutions which are here emphasized as monuments to a great event have a history of their own. Not only the event for which they stand, but they themselves must be accounted for in the settlement of the question. They have each of them, and inseparably, a history of nearly two thousand years. Where did they come from? And how came they with such charm and power? Manifestly,

*they are here,* and are traceable to that memorable morning, and to the event which made the day memorable forever; they are here after ceaseless and terrible conflict through the centuries—assailed, often marred, often broken and corrupted; but still here after many seeming failures, but by a succession of glorious triumphs; they are here accepted and accredited in their evidence after the severest testing by the most powerful appliances known to man; they are here as a large part of the world's life today, in great and growing power, much the same in form and spirit and purpose as when our Lord first ordained them and sent them on their mission to testify for him.

Christianity and Christendom are words fixed in the world's literature. They stand for the kingdom of Christ. They represent ideas and facts and doctrines and lives which are interwoven in the history of all the mightiest nations of the earth. They are the woof shot through and through the warp of history. There is no history with Christianity left out. It has conquered its right to be. Historic Christianity demands the historic Christ; the historic Christ demands the risen Christ. Stay, O reader, in your denial of his resurrection, until these institutions which he has set as monuments to himself and to his mighty deeds, shall be obliterated from the face of the earth—until history be rewritten and rewrought! These glorious achievements could not be, had he been holden of death and seen corruption. They are unaccountable and impossible except through him who was dead and is alive

again; who, "the mightiest among the holy and the holiest among the mighty, lifted with his pierced hands empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages."

Then is Christ risen from the dead—this is the testimony of the monuments themselves, and also of their own wonderful history through the centuries and throughout the world wherever men have gone with the Gospel of the Son of God. And so the resurrection of Jesus as a *simple fact* takes rank with other facts. Its marvelous significance stands. It is the hope and joy of the world. And here stand our monuments too —the New Testament, the Christian Sabbath as the Lord's Day, the ordinance of baptism wherein we are buried and risen with him, and the church of God, whose King is Christ the Lord. They are renowned in their own history, but even more renowned and made sublime, each in itself, because testifying and certifying the empty sepulcher and the risen Christ as the crowning glory of human history.

### The Far-off Brought Near.

5. Monuments appeal to faith and awaken the power to realize. These institutions give us a far-off vision of that wondrous event. Or, rather, our faith serving as a kind of telescope and trained along the line of these institutions in the march of history, gives a view near at hand. It makes the resurrection the most present and powerful factor in the lives of men—their

joy and crown of rejoicing even in this twentieth century of the Christian Era.

Standing by the ancient Pyramids of Egypt, one easily puts himself back four thousand years when they were built and must have had builders. Standing by the monumental lion on the field of Waterloo, one easily puts himself into that terrible conflict of bloodshed and carnage. Walking now over the battle-fields of Shiloh and Chickamauga and Gettysburg, among the many monuments which mark historic places, one easily after more than forty years have passed feels the thrill of the gigantic conflict where blood ran like water, where valor and courage, the most illustrious in all the world, did honor to the American soldier. So also by these institutions of Christ, we may put ourselves at once into the very midst of the stirring scenes of that new morning—or rather, may bring them here today as near and living realities; present and full of joy. The New Testament, as the story of our Lord's life, glows with a new meaning; the Lord's Day takes on new significance and awakens a new song; baptism as the ordinance of our Lord's own appointment becomes luminous in the glory of the event which it commemorates and is glorified forever; the church takes on enlarged proportions, new importance and august majesty in its character and lofty mission.

By these monumental institutions and a living faith the distance is all gone and the far-off is brought near, brought back to this very hour. We see afresh the wonders of that new day and walk with our Lord in

the garden as he meets and greets his disciples in their gladness—somewhat, we may suppose, as one experiences in the study of the stars through the telescope from one of the great observatories. There the student of the heavens with the powerful instrument lives in far-away distances, walks amid wonders, and beholds splendors which dazzle and thrill. As he watches night after night, there comes a new star into the field of his vision, coming up from the eternal depths. He watches its movements, marks its magnitude and brilliance and phenomena, then gladdens the world in telling what he has seen.

> "So felt I, as some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken."

In some such way, as a meager illustration, the devout student of the far-off facts in history has his telescope—his faith looking through these institutions; swings it around as they do the great instruments in the lofty observatory; gets it well adjusted and trained on the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, until it covers as the field of vision that momentous period in the world's history. As you look there are changing and shifting scenes; first, a solid rock; then men as hewers of stone come on the scene, and soon a tomb appears newly hewn in the rock and finished, but as yet unused; then later others come, sad of countenance and dejected, bearing a body well prepared for burial and given a place in the new tomb, while a great stone is rolled to the mouth of the sepulcher—they leave and with the coming of yet others you see the stone sealed

with the Roman seal, and a Roman guard set to keep watch; as you look further you discern the incoming of a light from the further side—the quaking of the earth—the coming down of the angels—the rolling away of the great stone—the soldiers falling down as dead men—the coming forth of the risen Christ—the empty sepulcher left behind—the hurried coming of Peter and John—our Lord's meeting with Mary as she walks in the garden, and with the other women as they bear the glad news to the disciples—the whole field of vision full of stirring and startling movement, —then you turn and tell the world that something wonderful has happened—that a new event has come in the onward sweep of history, and that Jesus of Nazareth is alive again. And all the earth is filled with the glad news which has come down to us from century to century.

Oh, how wonderful and transcendent these institutions, which our Lord has ordained and crowned with the glory of his resurrection morning! How dear and sacred they are to those who love him and worship him as their Lord and their God! They not only help us in the *retrospect* as the heart in its devotion and faith sweeps away into the past; but they are full of *forecast* for the coming years, and their testimony of what has been is suddenly changed into a song of what shall be. In every voice they utter, they tell of further conflict indeed, but also of conquest, consummation, and coronation. They quicken our faith; they awaken the song of victory even while the battle is on

and at its fiercest. There is everywhere the note of triumph.

The Lord's Day looks to the Sabbath that has no end in the sweet fields of Eden where the tree of life is blooming; the Scriptures are full of promise, lifting the veil and revealing ineffable glories yet to come; baptism is bold out of measure, foretelling the resurrection of the dead, the undoing of the work of death, and the reversal in a moment of all preceding history; the church is a prediction of her Lord's coming; multiplied and multiplying in every country, and in successive centuries until ten thousand churches unite in ten thousand predictions of the one church that is to be—a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, holy and without blemish, the general assembly indeed, and in fullness the church of the firstborn whose name is written in heaven. There is everywhere the song of conquest—complete triumph, when the risen Christ shall be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. "O God, let the Sun of fighteousness speedily come forth, and leaping to the zenith stand still a thousand years!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### BAPTISM AND THE TRINITY.

"And Jesus came and spake to them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 18-20.)

IN these imperial words of command, emphasized by the occasion, our Lord put baptism in august relation to the Trinity, and crowned the new ordinance with honor and glory. They at once command baptism and furnish the baptismal formula for his disciples throughout all ages. The obligation to baptize is in his authority to command, while the wonderful words concerning the Trinity have in themselves their own sublime meaning, at once profound and far-reaching significance. The observance and keeping of the rite are entrusted to his disciples in their mission to the world. And the blessing of his presence is promised for its administration through the years and the centuries—always, even unto the end, when he shall come again in power and great glory.

Casual reading of the New Testament readily discovers the exalted position which baptism has in its system, while a deeper view only serves to deepen

the first impression, and to show how beautifully the ordinance maintains itself, even among things glorious in themselves and of commanding significance. It stands closely related to many of the fundamental doctrines of grace. Baptism, though an outward, physical act, yet stands as sentinel for the truth as it is in Jesus.

In this ordinance facts and doctrines and experiences of the most tremendous moment find expression and illustration and emphasis. It borrows from their renown and shines in their brilliancy. Here you find urgent reason for the lofty honor put upon baptism—an act insignificant in itself, yet charged with wonderful meaning, sharing in the moral dignity which belongs to great truths, and sublime in their moral grandeur.

There is pressing need that baptism be given its rightful position, and be held steadfastly in its proper relation. Its very greatness has led some astray, and they have ascribed to baptism a mystical power to cleanse, or a purchasing power to pardon, or a procuring efficacy to save. We can hardly wonder at this, so exalted is the ordinance and such wondrous things are said about it in the word of God. One is hardly surprised that the credulous and superstitious heathen in far-away times and countries should worship the sun or the ocean or the mountains. His mind is entranced and awed by the majesty of these monarchs in the kingdom of nature. In some such way baptism from the earliest centuries has been wrenched from the place Christ gave it. Because of its kingly character

and lofty position in the system it was thought to be and to do more than was ever intended for it.

But this is not strange; rather, the wonder is how any one with the New Testament open before his eyes can treat baptism with indifference, or count it of no importance, or in anywise speak lightly of it, or admitting its force still go on disregarding its requirement of personal recognition and obedience. It is as if one should walk the streets of the Imperial City and never see St. Peter's, or should look on Niagara with no responsive sensation to its majestic sight and thunderous roar, or walk out under the stars and feel no greatness of soul answering to their quiet but sublime speech.

The ordinance of baptism holds within itself things which rightly understood should stir the heart to its greatest depths. True, one must not make too much of baptism—of course not; but in this day there is danger lest we make too little of it. We cannot exaggerate the importance of its having the right emphasis, but this comes, and comes with power, only by holding the ordinance in its proper place and relation. To do this requires that baptism shall be *baptism*—the immersion in water of a penitent believer. Nothing else will suffice. Whatever mars baptism in form or subject or design or spirit, infringes upon its kingly place and does violence to the truth of God.

Christ set baptism in his house as commanded by him and to be obeyed by his followers, so that our treatment of the ordinance easily and of necessity be-

comes our treatment of him; and he has so set it among the doctrines that our view of baptism becomes almost a sure index to our view of the great doctrines; our creed concerning baptism will almost surely indicate our creed throughout the system.

### Its Special Emphasis of the Trinity.

1. Baptism specifies and gives emphasis to the great doctrine. The Trinity—Tri-unity, one in three and three in one—may be considered either as a fact concerning the Divine Being or as a doctrine in the Christian system. Whether fact or doctrine, it is of the most august character, and both ideas are clearly emphasized in the baptismal formula—"baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The expression, *into the name,* is very strong and of unique significance. It does not convey or contain authority for baptism. That authority, as already stated, is in the fact of Christ's commanding to baptize. But these words, *into the name,* go further. They show recognition of Christ's authority in our obedience to his command; but more, they declare with special and significant force our relation to the Trinity. They signalize and emphasize the Trinity, and give distinction and even sublime character to our act in baptizing and being baptized.

The Greek preposition *eis* (*eis to onoma, into the name*) may be rendered *in, into,* or *unto,* all meaning

the same thing, but each needing further exegetical definition and explanation. Dr. John A. Broadus and Dr. James P. Boyce gave earnest preference for *unto*, as meaning *with respect to*—*e. g.*, "baptism unto (*eis, in respect to*) repentance;" "be baptized every one of you upon the name of Jesus Christ for (*eis, in respect to, on account of*) the remission of sins;" "baptizing them in (*eis, in respect to*) the name," etc.

While accepting this exegesis, I have followed another translation, which is also well authorized, and have used *into* throughout this treatise as the strongest and more adequate rendering for this particular passage. Dr. Robinson, in his Greek Lexicon, says:

> "To be baptized *into* a thing—*i. e., into* the belief, profession, observance of any thing. To be baptized *into* a person—*i. e.*, into a profession of faith in any one, and sincere obedience to him. So *into the name of any one*, in the same sense. To baptize into the obligations incumbent on a disciple of any one."

It seems to me that *in* as a translation lacks strength, and *unto* lacks definiteness. If *into* may mislead or be too easily misconstrued, as Dr. Broadus says, the reason is that it has force and point, being stronger and more expressive. But while either rendering of the preposition needs doctrinal explanation, this original *eis* carries a profound and tremendous meaning for the believer as representing in the act of baptism his relation to the several persons in the Godhead, and showing also the exalted character of the ordinance itself because of its high place and noble service in the system of Christian doctrine.

Christ himself has given baptism this sublime relation to the Trinity in his very appointment of the ordinance. Indeed, his command to baptize includes also the holding of it in this relation. There is nothing that could make the ordinance more exalted or more glorious. Surely none would dare give baptism such a place, had not our Lord led the way and commanded us to follow, doing as he had done. And now that he has placed it there, let none dare violate its rightful position.

In the simple order of the words, and in the very structure of the sentence, the baptismal formula asserts, with all clearness and force, Unity of Being and Trinity of Persons—both oneness and separateness. In the one "name" you see the one God, the Jehovah of all ages and of all peoples; in the separate mention of Father and of Son and of Holy Spirit, you have the three separate Persons of the eternal Godhead.

## The Doctrine in the Ordinance.

This ineffable truth, too profound for us to comprehend, and yet submitted to our faith, found glorious illustration when our Saviour was baptized—immersed by John in the Jordan. The Son was there to be baptized; the Holy Spirit was there in dove-like shape; and the Father was there, giving his approval—his approval of the Son and of the Son's immersion in the Jordan. This brings together the ordinary and extra-

ordinary—and makes baptism, an act so simple in itself, glorious in the majesty of this great truth.

Moreover, baptism has guardianship over this doctrine, holds it steadfastly before the world and proclaims it among men. It cannot be administered except in the use of these solemn and august words; and so far as I know or dare go, there can be no other use of these words in this form, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"—except in connection with baptism. Their depth of meaning will probably not be known in this life; but there is danger lest we underrate their wonderful significance.

They declare the Fatherhood of God, the Lordship of the Son, the Personality of the Holy Spirit, and the equality of all three throughout. This is a tremendous truth, but is the truth which is boldly set forth in the ordinance of baptism. And wherever baptism takes place this wonderful doctrine, rather this marvelous grouping together of doctrines, finds repetition and emphasis. Not only is this true for today, but through all the centuries since Christ first set these words in this arrangement for his people, whenever baptism was administered the world heard afresh the sounding out of this doctrine as if coming from the very heavens as God's message to men, and making familiar by usage one of the most glorious revelations of sublime truth.

Moreover, in the act of baptism there is with all parties concerned a declaration and profession of faith. This faith includes each of the three Persons of the Godhead, and crowns them each as *Sovereign*—collec-

tively and individually ruling in our lives. Here we declare not only our faith, but also our allegiance and loyalty and service to the glorious Three in one. Our baptism becomes at once our creed and pledge for holy living, and for walking in all the ordinances of the Lord's house. It is impossible indeed for any other single act to say more than is said here. The very power and beauty of the ordinance lies in its *declarative* character. It declares in plainest way what we believe, what we have experienced, what we purpose, and to whom we subscribe our allegiance and life.

There is no room here for the Unitarian or for the Unitarian faith. The creed of every rightful baptism is: I believe in God the Father, I believe in God the Son, I believe in God the Holy Spirit. Such is the majesty and moral greatness of baptism. It has teaching power, and its teaching concerns these lofty themes of the Gospel.

Baptism's meaning and character are always the same, whether administered in a beautiful stream like the Jordan, or some pool in a quiet country place, or in the baptistery of the stately house of worship, or in some more humble place of meeting and worship—*so only it be baptism,* the immersion of believers, "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Here heaven and earth join in the one solemn scene. Baptism is always an act of worship, and the very place of its administration partakes of the glory of

worship. Here we have the burning bush; here we stand on holy ground with sandals removed from our feet; here we look and wonder; we listen and hear the wondrous voice of God. This is the place, not for controversy either with man or with God, but for simple observance of God's law in profound reverence for the things which he has commanded. This is our doxology set in emblem—the doxology of all ages and countries, the doxology awakened and sung in every administration of baptism:

> Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
> Praise him, all creatures here below;
> Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
> Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This lofty strain of praise well becomes the sublime act, in which we worship God, and in which he has shown such marvelous condescension, and revealed so much of his grace. The glory of the Trinity is upon the scene, and should subdue us into reverence and awe, and should awaken the glad song of grateful praise.

### Baptism and the Lord Jesus.

2. The voice of baptism is a voice for the Godhead of Jesus. Baptism and the Lord Jesus—these words are put together with intent, as comporting with all that is written concerning the ordinance, and emphasizing its importance and its relation to the doctrine of redemption. Christ, the second Person in the Trinity, by his own baptism in the Jordan set us an example of the pattern and spirit and purpose of baptism, and

gave it the strongest possible endorsement of his own personal action, as if putting upon it his signature written by his own hand. And later when perpetuating baptism, and commanding its observance for all time, he put upon it and into it all the authority which had been given to him whether in heaven or in earth. So that baptism crowns Jesus of Nazareth as King of kings and Lord of lords, and at the same time sets out in powerful fashion his redemptive work and what he brings to the believer in the redemption purchased by his own blood.

The Trinity—separateness of the three Persons in the Godhead and their co-operation in human redemption—is clearly recognized and emphasized in the Scriptures. These Divine Persons operate and co-operate individually and conjointly and concurrently to save lost men. This is God's plan of redemption, and almost, if not altogether, its crowning glory, and the cause of its marvelous efficiency and efficacy. As doctrine this deserves to hold a most exalted place in our thinking and in all our conduct. This joint work of the Trinity is stated in the word of God as follows:

> "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" gave him to die "The just for the unjust," as "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."
>
> And Christ as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," "Hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" And by his own precious blood "has obtained eternal redemption for us, having through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God."

The story of redemption is the story of what God has done through the work of Christ and through the effective working of the Holy Spirit to save a lost and ruined world, "that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," and "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

## His Redemptive Work.

Now mark you, as holding to the simple purpose of this discussion, Christ has set baptism in this great system with a distinct place and purpose, as relates both to the doctrine of the Trinity and to the doctrine of his own redemptive work. It emphasizes at once Christ's place in the Godhead, and also his specific office in the redemptive scheme. His death on the cross, his burial in the tomb, his resurrection from the dead—these three acts in the way of tragedy and triumph—constitute the very heart and are the very essence of his work of redemption. This is everywhere manifest throughout the word of God. He loved us and gave himself for us; he died for us and rose again for us. We are justified by his blood and saved from wrath through him. His blood is the propitiation of our sins and cleanseth us from all sin; the cry and hope of the soul is that his blood may

> Be of sin the double cure,
> Save from wrath and make me pure.

In his own august baptism in the Jordan, as in the baptism of every believer, there is a plain yet marvelous setting forth of our Lord's death and of his burial and of his resurrection—so plain that none need fail to see it, so astounding that all may well wonder. With him at the Jordan it was a foretelling, a setting out beforehand what should surely come, and afterwards did come, when he died on the cross and was buried and rose again in the execution of the wonderful plan. His baptism was at once both cross and sepulcher—the tragedy of the one, the triumph of the other. Our baptism is intended to serve the same lofty double purpose, to show his burial and resurrection, and is a declaration moreover of our union with him by faith, in his dying and rising again and in our sharing in all that these mighty events accomplished in the plan of redemption.

Baptism does nothing for us, yet declares in a wonderful way what has been done for us—*already done beforehand,* both as to what Christ wrought when he died on the cross, and what God wrought when he raised him from the dead, and what was wrought in us by the Holy Spirit when we believed on him.

"So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also." (Rom. 6: 3, 4.)

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 3: 21.)

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22: 16.)

"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 25, 26.)

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised him from the dead." (Col. 2: 12.)

These are remarkable utterances, and show the *figurative* power of baptism in setting out in figure and in emblem what Christ has done for us. It declares our relation to him by faith, and shows the effect of his work in us. We have here the figures of death—burial—resurrection—washing or cleansing—and the putting on, as of a uniform. These are all *figures,* not a confusion of figures, but showing the many-sidedness of baptism in its declaration of the different phases and effects of Christ's redemptive work. To understand baptism in its relation to the Lord Jesus, and in relation to his shedding of blood for the world's redemption, is of profound importance and greatly honors and exalts the ordinance.

### Symbol of the Real Fountain.

Baptism cannot in any sense take away sin, cannot in any sense save or help to salvation. Nothing but the atoning work of Christ can do this; and we come into its benefits by simple faith in him, a faith which accepts him as Saviour and leads to obeying him as our Lord. It is the saved and pardoned man who

comes to baptism, and in his baptism shows by emblem and pictorial representation the one source of his salvation.

Sin is of the heart, of the deepest inner nature of man. No physical act can reach it. Nothing but the blood can take it away. It is folly and ruin to look for help in any other, much less for saving efficacy. A porter washing a large window from the outside used much effort to remove one ugly spot; but it could not be effaced, and was finally discovered to be on the inside. So it is with sin. It is like the stain on Macbeth's hand; all the waters of all the seas cannot make it clean or take away its stain. The sin-stricken soul is driven to Christ for redemption, for cleansing, for life and salvation—to Christ in his death and burial and resurrection—to Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, and who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; who ever liveth to make intercession for us; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

All that is wonderful; but here is the further wonder, that while baptism cannot save, it yet serves as a marvelous picture of what does save. It shows in a picture the death of the Lord Jesus, his burial and resurrection, and therein we find redemption. It cannot cleanse and yet in a marvelous way shows in emblem "the fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness." Baptism stands, not as procuring but showing, not as giving but telling, not as working a change within us but disclosing and declaring a change

*already wrought.* It is only a picture, but a glorious picture of more glorious facts and realities. Count it a picture and emblem, and then one can hardly do it too much honor. Back of this ordinance, and entirely apart from it, and not to be confounded with it,

> *There is a fountain* filled with blood
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
> And sinners plunged beneath *that flood,*
> Lose all their guilty stains.
>
> Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
> Shall never lose its power,
> Till all the ransomed church of God
> Be saved to sin no more.
>
> E'er since by faith I saw the stream
> Thy flowing wounds supply,
> Redeeming love has been my theme,
> And shall be till I die.
>
> When this poor, lisping, stamm'ring tongue
> Lies silent in the grave,
> Then in a nobler, sweeter song
> I'll sing thy power to save.

To substitute baptism for *that fountain* in any way is monstrous, and disjoints the whole system, and is for the soul's undoing. But *as a picture* of that fountain baptism is glorious to look upon. There is where Christ put baptism; that is the service for which he intended it; and there we should hold it as teaching the great doctrine concerning himself and his redemptive work.

### Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

3. The ordinance holds symbolic relation to the specific work of the Holy Spirit. This does not refer

to what in modern times is usually called "the baptism of the Spirit," but which John and the Saviour himself called being "baptized in the Holy Spirit." That wonderful event, whatever its meaning and whether it had any repetition upon its first glorious consummation, does not come within the scope of the present discussion. And yet it adds meaning and dignity and honor to the ordinance of baptism, that both John and Jesus use it for symbolizing "baptism in the Spirit"—making it foretell what with them was future, but what afterwards found fulfillment on the day of Pentecost. On that great day in the history of Christianity the Holy Spirit came from heaven and filled all the house where the disciples were sitting, and they were baptized in him, enveloped, overwhelmed, immersed in his influence and power, even as Jesus and others had been immersed in the Jordan.

Dr. Schaff (Presbyterian) translates the Commentary of Lange (Lutheran) on Matt. 3: 11, as follows: "I baptize you in water, immersing you in the element of water. . . . He will entirely immerse you in the Holy Spirit." On the same text Dr. Plumptre (Episcopalian) writes: "As heard and understood at the time, the baptism with the Holy Ghost would imply that the souls thus baptized would be plunged, as it were, in that creative and informing Spirit." And writing on Acts 1: 5, Dr. Plumptre also says: "Now they were told that their spirits were to be as fully baptized—that is, plunged—into the power of the Divine Spirit as their bodies had been plunged in the waters of the Jordan."

But here is an additional doctrine not less important, or less glorious. The Holy Spirit, as the Third Person in the adorable Trinity, has his specific office in the

redemptive scheme, and his work like the work of the Son finds its symbol, in part at least, in the ordinance of baptism. He has his fixed place in the baptismal formula, and is there recognized and honored and worshiped in its every administration. It is wonderful that our Saviour should have brought baptism into such sublime relation, and made the simple ordinance do service that befits the angels of God; and yet no one would dare to abridge the baptismal formula. It must be "baptizing *into the name* of the Father, and of the Son, *and of the Holy Spirit*"—declaring for his Personality and Sovereignty, and for our allegiance to him in life and service.

His office in redemption is in part to apply the atonement of Christ and to make it effective in human hearts. It is his to quicken and make alive, to convict of sin and to cleanse in the blood of the Lamb from all uncleanness, and to beget within us "a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

So there is "the unity of the Spirit; the one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Inseparable in Being, doing work separate in operation, and yet one in glorious and final achievement. It is the office and work of the Holy Spirit to give the new heart, to bring about the new birth, to make new creatures in Christ Jesus, to translate from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, to bring us from death into life, to work a spiritual resurrection from a spiritual death,

that we may live in Christ to the glory of God the Father. All this wonderful output of divine grace and of divine power finds its outward manifestation in the ordinance of baptism—"the one baptism" standing for all three and bearing testimony for the work that each has done. To quote a learned Episcopalian scholar, Dr. Sanday, baptism equals three things—viz.: "Immersion = death; submersion = burial (ratification of death); emergence = resurrection."

> "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2: 4-6.)

And just as Christ's resurrection from the grave, so also our being raised up with him by the Holy Spirit finds its symbol in our baptism wherein we are buried with Christ, and wherein also we are risen with him by faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead and us with him.

### Baptism and Church Membership.

4. Baptism in its very nature stands for the doctrine of a spiritual membership in the churches of Christ. Its voice beyond all controversy is, that only converted and saved people can make the character of a church, and fulfill its high and lofty purpose and mission in the world. This is true whether baptism be "the door into the church" or simply an ordinance within. In

either case only the baptized can be members, and only those can be baptized who have been raised up from spiritual death and made alive in Christ. Baptism of any and all others is without meaning, is sacrilege, and does violence to the whole round of doctrines as they stand related to each other and as Christ has given them to us. Concerning members in a church of Jesus Christ may be written the wonderful words—"Baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

A converted membership in our churches is manifestly the doctrine of the New Testament, and is clearly promised and required and provided for in God's plan of grace. It is a glorious doctrine greatly exalting a church as to its character and function and mission. It finds expression and emphasis and even requirement in baptism as an ordinance of the Lord's house.

A church of Christ is for the saved. Men come through Christ to the church, and not through the church to Christ. Only those who are first *in Christ* can be *in the church*—and of it. Baptism demands this end, guards this great doctrine, and insists upon its practice.

Lower the standard of baptism as to power or meaning or spirit, and you lower the standard of church membership. The preservation of one is the preservation of the other; the glory of one is the glory of the other. Knowing and holding baptism in its larger and more exalted meaning will lead into the larger view of the character and life and work of a church of

Christ. This is the place where we need high thinking and humble living to the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

### Significant but Without Efficacy.

In our study of the ordinance of baptism there is need to distinguish between efficacy and significance. Baptism is absolutely without efficacy, is possessed of no mystical power whatever. It does not save or help to save; it does not even "mark a definite point where salvation begins or where we can know we are saved." It has no office or value in this way, and can do nothing whatever for the unsaved—except perchance as they may be impressed in witnessing the baptism of others.

And yet, baptism is full of meaning, and of marvelous significance when administered as Christ commanded. By figure and emblem it holds in itself many of the greatest facts and doctrines in the whole system. It is full of their meaning and beautiful in their significance. It tells of wonderful things in its form and spirit and purpose. It brings us face to face with Jehovah in solemn worship and service—declaring the grace of God and showing his workmanship more glorious than the stars.

Oh! how wonderful God is, in his revelation of himself to men! As seen in Isaiah's vision he is high and lifted up; as worshiped by Moses at the Red Sea he is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. His very name is Holy—the Holy One of Israel. He

dwells in the high and lofty place, but "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one."

And in his marvelous condescension he gives his Son, and gives his Spirit, and works his work of grace in the heart, in bringing men to himself and leading them out into the sunlight of his love. And they in joyous testimony to his grace and saving power, and in declaring their faith, their allegiance, and their service to him, are "baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," glorifying God and giving everlasting praises to him. And baptism is glorified in declaring the glory of God.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE NEW BIRTH AND THEN BAPTISM.

THE new birth comes before baptism, and is essential to baptism. The purpose of this chapter is to separate them, and yet emphasize their importance each in its own sphere and office. They certainly are not of equal importance, and have no connection whatever, especially not as making baptism causative of the new birth, or making the new birth dependent in any sense upon baptism.

To give baptism any other position frustrates the whole plan as set out in the New Testament, perverts the ordinance and mars its simplicity and nobleness, and utterly misses the doctrine of the new birth as well as its significance as a work of grace wrought in the human heart.

#### Making a Statement of Doctrine.

1. The doctrine of the new birth has its statement in the following passages of Scripture:

> "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 12, 13.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3: 3, 5-8.)

"In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4: 15.)

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." (James 1: 18.)

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Pet. 1: 23.)

These several passages set out the necessity and origin and the different phases of the new birth, while the Baptist view of this doctrine, as based upon these and other utterances from the word of God, may be stated in the following article of denominational faith:

"We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruit of repentance and faith and newness of life."

These passages of Scripture, as well as the article of denominational faith, do not mention or even make reference to baptism,* and yet furnish a full statement

* The words "born of water" have been the subject of much discussion. The weight of authority and argument leads me to the conclusion that the Saviour did not refer to baptism. And if he did, this passage should be classed with those that indicate the symbolic import of the ordinance.

concerning the new birth! The meaning of this is plain, and should keep them ever apart in both creed and practice. Baptism is a physical act, while the new birth is spiritual; the one is performed by man and concerns the body, the other is of the heart and is wrought by the Holy Spirit of God. And yet baptism holds commanding significance even here, if only it be viewed in its own place and lofty purpose.

The words "new birth" mean the same as the word "regeneration," which simply means a second birth; the first in somewhat different form being more frequently used in the New Testament in the expressions, "born again," "born of God," "born of the Spirit," etc., while the term regeneration is more common in modern usage. But they mean the same thing, describing the same doctrine and the same experience. They describe that condition and change of heart in which one becomes a Christian or a child of God or a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Except a man be born again; marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

### Different Figures of Speech.

The marvelous change in the saved man's condition is wholly spiritual, and cannot be described except in the use of physical terms. But we must keep in mind that these terms are only figurative language. The very words, new birth and regeneration, are figures of speech and descriptive of precisely the same thing. The expressions also "born of God," "begotten of God,"

"born of the Spirit," "born again," are of the same figure and mean the same thing. They are only different expressions of one thought, descriptive of one work, designating the change in which one comes into new spiritual life, or becomes a child of God, or, speaking in common parlance, is converted and becomes a Christian.

The figure of birth, a second birth or regeneration, is the figure most frequently used; but there are also other figures for the same thing. For besides being called a birth, or born again, this change is also called "a new creation" (2 Cor. 5: 17), a change of heart (Ez. 36: 26-28), "a resurrection from the dead" (Eph. 2: 5, 6), "a translation" (Col. 1: 13). These different words and phrases are only so many different figures of speech to express something that has taken place in the human heart. All of them, and each of them separately, like the phrase "born again," must be counted figurative language, and yet expressive and illustrative of wondrous and glorious reality. And that reality is the specific work which is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, wherein one is quickened and raised up together with Christ, and so becomes a new creature in him, old things having passed away and all things having become new.

### This Work is of God.

2. Manifestly it is not of man—in man as its subject, but not of man as produced by him. It is put

utterly beyond his power by these wonderful figures of speech, which clearly set forth both its nature and its authorship. It is not of man to make his heart new, to make for himself a new creation, to raise the spiritually dead any more than to raise the physically dead. He cannot do these things for himself, nor can he do them for others. As well let him expect to change the leopard's spots, or to create stars, or to turn a cemetery into a living, worshiping assembly of people. He cannot translate his own heart from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Here man is utterly helpless. And the learning of this is to learn of his being lost and that he must seek help in another, even in one who is mighty to save. Here he looks out of himself and looks to the rock that is higher.

Though man is lost, his condition is not hopeless. The change indicated in these figures not only emphasized the necessity for divine power and interference, but lay in the plane of God's plan and purpose and promise of working. It is his to create, whether in making worlds and systems of worlds or in making us new creations in Christ Jesus; it is his to raise the dead, whether of Jesus in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea or of a human heart dead in trespasses and in sins.

This power of God is not only required, but is promised, is operative, is effective, and the sinner is born again, born of God, or is made alive in Christ Jesus and raised up with him by the same power which raised him from the dead. "We are his workmanship,

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;" and believers "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And God puts himself thoroughly and singly behind the mighty work of making the heart new, and pledges his power and promise both that it shall be done and that it shall be of the new and higher life.

> "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." (Ez. 36: 26, 27.)

This doctrine of the new birth not only has no "fatalism" in it, but is the outlet for man's deliverance, and opens the way for the dead to live, for the lost to be saved. God here works by units and makes hearts anew individually, each one in himself; and men come into the kingdom one at a time. Even if a nation is born unto God in a day, yet the nation is moved by units, and each man feels for himself the mighty power and experiences for himself the wondrous grace. He has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

### Manifestly a Human Side.

3. And yet manifestly, and even necessarily, man has much to do with this work which so thoroughly is of God; much to do with his own being born of the

Spirit; so much so, indeed, that he alone is responsible if in himself it be absent. Nature is full of conditions illustrative of this double agency in effecting wonderful results. Everywhere are signs of the limitations of human power, of the inadequacy and weakness of man's hand to do, and yet where at the same time man's hand is needed for the doing.

In nature as in grace, in grace as in nature, the increase is of God, but man must plant and plow, plan and cultivate. The crop is a joint crop, and everywhere man works together with God. The fountain flowing at his feet, the grain growing in the field, the fruit hanging on the tree, the flowers blooming in the garden—all of these are beyond man's power of making, and yet, in a profound sense, are the product of his hand, and are for his appetite and using and pleasure. In their richness they are his, and administer to his deepest physical needs.

So also in the spiritual sphere, where these great principles hold in a higher sense, is there no human side to the stupendous fact of the new birth? What can one do concerning and in behalf of his being born of the Spirit of God? This is really a momentous question, and requires honest consideration and candid answer. Herein lies the most weighty transaction with which man has to do, and its consequences are of the most commanding and imperial character. Just here marks the dividing line between God's mercy and his wrath, between the lost and saved condition in the human soul.

(1) Man can recognize the nature of the new birth as shown him in the word of God. To do this does not require much, and yet is basal and vital. The making of a peach is beyond human skill; its coloring and flavor and growth are not of man, but he may study its nature and recognize the forces that tend to its product. It is within the scope of man's power also to know the nature of this wondrous work which the Bible describes in figures at once so startling and profound. It is a change, a great change, which in its nature is divine and spiritual—divine as to origin and authorship, being wrought of God, and spiritual, being wrought in man's spiritual nature. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

It introduces no new faculty, works no violence to any constitutional element of man's nature, and yet affects in the profoundest way his entire intellectual, moral, and religious being. It is a change of heart—an inward change, not outward at all, except in its fruitage, and even its richest fruitage is of the heart. Reformation is not regeneration. There is no room in Bible teaching or philosophical thought for "baptismal regeneration," either in doctrine or in fact. Much is gained in simply *recognizing* what is done for one in God's begetting him again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is only a recognition. That is not much, but it is a start; and a start is always better than a stand.

(2) Furthermore, another thing which man may do in his being born again, he can admit the necessity of

the new birth as it relates to himself. This is an immense advance upon the other, and is the point at which many hesitate. But it shows something in reach of man concerning this wondrous work. This strikes at every species of self-righteousness; it marks man not only as a sinner needing forgiveness, but also sinful and needing a change in his very nature no less marked and radical than a new birth, or a new creation, or a resurrection; it calls out in fearful colors and coloring the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the human heart.

One is slow, even after admitting the necessity of the new birth in a general way, to admit that he needs to have this work wrought in his heart and for himself. And yet it is necessary with every one—necessary to his being a child of God, necessary to his having a heavenly inheritance and entrance, necessary to his admission into church-membership with its ordinances and service, necessary to his spiritual discernment of spiritual truth. Christ's "ye must be born again" is true and imperative with every human heart. *Let one bring himself* face to face with Christ, who knows what is in man—listen to his word as he stands under his searching eye: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Believing his solemn, august words in the fullness of their meaning and as relates to yourself, you have done something looking to your being born of the Spirit. And we must not undervalue this something. It is of immense importance as relates to oneself and to God

and to the mighty change which is yet to come in his heart. Without this first, however, would the change ever come? With it, one may not be far from the kingdom of God.

(3) But another step is possible and full of tremendous moment. A man can submit himself unto God, and so put himself in line with the great agencies through which God moves and operates. This is possible and actual every day in natural things and in temporal affairs. It is a possibility of immense importance in things spiritual—a possibility which lays at the door of every man's heart the responsibility of his being born of the Spirit of God.

The new birth is necessary to some things. So also some things are necessary to the new birth, and these last must be done and they are for man's doing. They condition his being born of God, and seem even to limit God's power, or at least are in his plans of working. Here, as in nature, are great lines on which God moves in this wondrous operation. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth;" "born again . . . by the word of God;" "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and the power of God also to the renewing of the human heart and making one a new creature in Christ Jesus. In submitting to God or to his word one submits to his wondrous power, not wholly unlike the field baring its bosom to the plowshare, which tears up the soil and throws open the furrow for the sowing of the seed and for the future harvest.

There are also here in the spiritual realm things to be done; things man can do and must do, and things of tremendous moment. For example, serious thoughtfulness—thoughts about God and Christ and sin and self; earnest prayer—praying for oneself, and others praying with him. Here surely one comes closely upon the very point of contact between the divine and the human—the one quickening and vitalizing the other. Praying is of the human heart, and hearing is of the divine heart. Man prays and God answers. Oh, that wondrous, wondrous touch of the divine with the human! and the sinner is made alive in Christ, is born of the Spirit and becomes a child of God.

### Example of the Principle.

A young boy having for the first time a New Testament lay under the shade of a tree reading the Gospel of John. Through the first chapter, through the second chapter, and into the third he came. When his eyes fell upon those searching words, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again," he laid the book down and prayed, "O, Lord, let me be born again right now!" The Holy Spirit moved into his heart and wrought the work of grace. The boy leaped to his feet, rushed into the house shouting as he came, "O, mother, mother, something has happened; something has happened!" That was the new birth; it was of God. It came to the child as he read and prayed—the Spirit of God moving and leading the way even in

the prayer. Reading the word of God and prayer are mighty agencies of God's appointment and using for doing this work. And yet these are things for man to do.

When the Jewish Rabbi failed to comprehend this gracious wonder of being born from above, Jesus turned him to an outward sight. He remembered and could understand the serpent of brass in the wilderness. And now, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Believing is not the new birth, nor is the new birth believing, and yet "he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Herein is the supreme moment of the soul, when, stricken with a deep sense of personal sin and guilt, sorrow and anguish, it submits to God in the acceptance of his Son, and beholds for the first time "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The work of grace has been wrought; he is trusting in the Lord Jesus, is saved, and sings redeeming love.

(4) One other thing on the human side. It is of man to discern the evidences of the new birth in his own experience. It is for him to know and say when the gracious work has been wrought. He may need as the child mentioned above, or as Samuel in the temple needed, some one to interpret himself to himself, and to tell him the meaning of the voice that is sounding in his heart. But the work is in his own heart, and the witness is within himself that he is born

again, born of God and is a child of God. "The wind bloweth where it listeth; *thou hearest the sound thereof,* but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

We may know much, even in the midst of the most inscrutable things. And what is known must not be discounted by what is unknown. The blind man whose eyes had been opened knew that he had been blind, and that he could now see, but did not know who had opened his eyes. We need to emphasize the words "*thou hearest* the sound thereof," that is a great fact and is easily discernible. The new birth also is an experience, and is known by itself—one hearing and tasting and seeing for himself—each in his own experience. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with *our spirits* that we are the children of God."

There are wonders of the eye and ear and tongue, deeper wonders in the connection of these several organs with the brain, and deeper wonders still in the brain as the basis of mind, with its endowment of thinking power. Yet all these—eye and ear and tongue, are open to experiences which are their own evidence and which are discerned by him who sees and hears and tastes and thinks.

So, also, with the marvelous passions of the human soul. Each and every one of them, whether in its calm or storm, is beyond human comprehension, and yet has experiences self-evidencing and also easily discernible. In the new birth there is a new experience, that tells its own wondrous story—known to him whose experi-

ence it is, and gladly made known to others. Before, the burden of his cry was, "God be merciful to me the sinner!" But now, out of a heart where joy and sorrow strangely meet and mingle, he pours out his soul in this: "Abba, Father!"

"Awakened by Sinai's awful sound,
My soul in bonds of guilt I found,
And knew not where to go;
Eternal truth did loud proclaim,
'The sinner must be born again,
Or sink in endless woe.'

"When to the law I trembling fled,
It poured its curses on my head;
I no relief could find;
This fearful truth increased my pain:
'The sinner must be born again,'
O'erwhelmed my tortured mind.

"But while I thus in anguish lay,
Jesus of Nazareth passed that way,
And felt his pity move;
The sinner, by his justice slain,
Now by his grace is born again,
And sings redeeming love."

All this lies above our comprehension, and yet has been realized in the experience of many, many thousands as the years have passed. It is the same old story told again and again by every one, who believing in Christ as Saviour has been born of the Spirit of God and has passed from death unto life. It is the common experience of grace.

### Finding Outward Manifestation.

4. All this comes before baptism, independently of it, and in baptism finds an outward expression. The

new birth gives faith in Christ as its fruitage, and faith compels baptism as obedience to Christ's law—not in order to be saved, but because salvation has already come. The first word of the spirit of adoption is, Abba, Father; the first word of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour is a word of the renewed heart, My Lord and my God. Obedience then becomes easy, natural, necessary—necessary to meet the high requirements of the new life. He is baptized not to be born again, but because he is born again; not to make him a child of God, but because he is a child of God. And his baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God.

This distinction is very important. There is a wide, wide difference between this and the coming to baptism to secure peace of mind from a sense of sin, or to obtain pardon of sin in an act of obedience, or to effect an inner change of heart by an outer physical performance. It differs as widely as heaven and earth from "baptismal regeneration" in all its different shades of meaning. Here you have a marvelous spiritual result wrought in the spirit of man by the Spirit of God. And baptism stands on the outside to represent and symbolize the inner change. It is of immense importance to keep the two apart and to hold them in their proper relation. If one has not the new birth, then he has nothing for which to be baptized. His immersion a thousand times over would have no value or be of any avail or represent anything.

This view is enforced and illustrated in the very form and nature and meaning of baptism, as it relates

to the new experience and new condition. There have been conflicting views as to the relation of baptism to the new birth, but they all have a common point in emphasizing the importance of baptism and its high character because of its connection with this mightiest experience of the human heart.

The most common view perhaps regards baptism as a symbol of the new birth—an outward sign of an inward sealing. This does not seem clear or adequate. Indeed it does not appear that baptism is a figure of a birth. But when another figure of speech is used, and the great change and new conditions are called not a being born again but a *spiritual resurrection*, then indeed baptism becomes its outward manifestation and expression in a way at once beautiful and impressive.

When one hears the voice of the Son of God in his soul dead in sin, and in answer to that voice lives and is raised up with him; when he believes and hath everlasting life, and has passed from death unto life, then indeed baptism becomes a marvelous and glorious symbol of what has taken place in his heart. Here in a figure he is buried with Christ in baptism because he is dead to sin; here also he is raised from the grave of baptism because he is alive to God; here also he makes expression of his faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus because of which he himself comes to live in him. He is baptized into Jesus Christ; baptized into his death; buried with him by baptism into death; wherein also he is raised up again. Bap-

tism thus becomes the marvelous method of showing in a picture his resurrection to a new life, and tells also of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It does not give life, but is beautiful and sublime in showing to the world how one has life from the dead and how we live in him and to his glory.

Thus the new birth is magnified as the greatest of all spiritual changes, almost the most marvelous of all the works of the Spirit of God. It stands alone in its glory and begins a work that becomes brighter and brighter to the perfect day. Nor does this view lower the nature and design of baptism, or lessen its value and high standing in the Christian system, but rather exalts it to its rightful place and makes it do honor to God and bring blessing to man. And so the ordinance will ever share in the renown of this great change, wrought by the power of God operating in human hearts, simply because it stands as a beautiful and instructive symbol of the change—stands for life from the dead, and for a larger life and a larger hope.

# CHAPTER IX.

## BAPTISM OF THE BELIEVER.

"And Jesus said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.)

"What must I do to be saved? And they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord and to all that were in his house."

"And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." (Acts 16: 30-34.)

THE first of these passages is Christ's command for preaching his Gospel; the second is the execution of this command by Paul and Silas in the case of the jailer and his family at Philippi. There is preaching and believing and salvation and baptism and rejoicing. It shows the relation of baptism to the believer and to his being saved. This is a typical case, and is repeated wherever the Gospel is preached and men accept Jesus Christ as their Lord.

"Believer's Baptism" is universally accepted among Christians as a doctrine and practice of the New Testament. It needs no defense or enforcement. The only purpose here is to emphasize it by a specific instance, and to develop its meaning with the person

who is baptized. This magnifies baptism and gives a better view both of its significance and exalted character. So we are led here to study the *believer himself,* rather than his baptism.

## No Room for Infant Baptism.

"Infant Baptism" is something entirely apart. As a principle and practice it is an occasion of division among Christians; it has no mention in the New Testament, although baptism is a New Testament ordinance, and has there every law for its government as to subject and form and design. True, "baptizing infants" is not forbidden in the New Testament by word; and yet, it is even more powerfully prohibited by the very nature of the ordinance and by its requirement and meaning for the individual. Baptism is not possible with infants, simply because it is utterly beyond them. And indeed the command to baptize is a command to *baptize believers,* and there is no authority or even permission to extend it to others. This excludes all others.

Moreover, scholars and leaders of every grade and name in denominations which practice the "baptism of infants," have admitted times and places without number that it has no command or even mention in the word of God. And such is their disagreement among themselves as to its value and ground of support, that they destroy the arguments of each other. Every argument and reason advanced in behalf of "in-

fant baptism" has been declared by some of its other advocates to have no bearing whatever on the subject, and to furnish no support to the practice. It would be easy to fill this entire volume with quotations to justify this statement. But what is the use? One can read the New Testament for himself, and this is being done more and more. And there is a growing disuse of the practice among those denominations who still retain it in their printed creeds and confessions of faith.

## An Essential Difference.

Baptist churches alone advocate and practice the baptism of only believers, meaning by believers those who have and make public profession of personal repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Believers and no others can meet the requirements of the noble and exalted service.

It is not forgotten that the Disciples also "baptize only believers" according to their meaning of the words. But simple justice requires the statement that between them and the Baptists there is vital and fundamental difference as to the meaning of saving faith, as to the condition of the believer in his relation to God and salvation, and as to the meaning and design of his baptism. They baptize in order to the remission of sins and in order to be saved, while Baptists hold just the reverse, that baptism is only for such as have been renewed, have passed from death unto life, have

received the remission of sins and are already saved. They hold that baptism is essential to salvation, while Baptists hold that salvation is essential to baptism. There is an agreement between us and them as to the form of baptism, both holding to immersion, but in every other respect concerning the ordinance there is not only no point of agreement, but the widest disagreement, and disagreement, too, concerning fundamental elements both in the doctrine and experience of grace. There can be no baptism without immersion, but there may be immersion that is not baptism.

This difference is fundamental, and its statement is essential to the present discussion, that "believer's baptism" may be rightly understood and appreciated, and that the right emphasis may be given to baptism, as showing its sublime character in baptizing a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## His Believing Precedes His Baptism.

1. The believer comes to baptism with faith in Christ and having what faith can give him. The jailer and his household came to baptism *as believers,* each believing in Christ and being baptized in personal obedience to him. Believing and obeying in their very nature are personal acts, and necessarily hold this order. In neither is there possible room for proxy.

The first two recorded instances of baptism in Europe as the Gospel won its way westward, were the

baptism of households—of Lydia and of the jailer. To introduce infants in these families as sharing in the believing and in the baptism and in the rejoicing, (1) is contradictory to the record, (2) is a strain on the imagination, (3) contravenes the command to baptize believers, (4) destroys the significance of the ordinance, (5) frustrates the whole plan of the Gospel, and (6) takes away the beauty of the wonderful triumph which grace had wrought in that heathen city and in those heathen families.

The jailer and his family came as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, having heard the preaching and having accepted him as theirs. And we must mark what the believer has and what he therefore brings with him when he comes to be baptized.

(1) Viewed from the standpoint of divine operation, the *believer* is redeemed, has been quickened, made alive from the dead and raised up with Christ; is born of God, hath passed from death unto life, hath everlasting life, is saved, justified and adopted into the holy family; is a child of God, having the Spirit of God. "Whom God did foreknow he also did predestinate, and whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." *He is saved* and has salvation through the grace of God.

(2) Viewed from the standpoint of human experience and condition of heart, the *believer* has been awakened to a sense of sin and personal guilt (convic-

tion through the Spirit of God); has repented of his sin, turning away from sin with sincere sorrow and seeking forgiveness of God with confession; and has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepted him as personal Saviour, and committed to him the soul with all its high interest. It is a personal faith in a personal Saviour, receiving Christ with all that Christ is and can do in his behalf, and giving himself to Christ in supreme trust.

It is only the high-born that can say: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." He finds expression for the new passion and joy and purpose of his new heart in the language of Thomas, "My Lord and my God;" or the language of Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," or in the language of the song:

Hallelujah! 'tis done,
I believe on the Son,
I'm saved by the blood
Of the crucified one.

(3) The believer has these things as viewed from the divine and the human standpoint. It is not necessary, or even wise, to discriminate between them as to precedence, except for convenience and better understanding. In what God does, it is a work of large

scope, and is done at once, and is complete; and the experience of grace is an experience of all coming together and at once, or recognized in progressive stages.

### The Order of Experiences.

I remember a man accustomed to handle freight in a railroad depot. He had a strong, vigorous mind, though with little cultivation; his conversion was marked and powerful, and he related his experience of grace in a way showing great richness and clearness. As a way of illustration for myself I asked him which came first in his experience, repentance or faith. He thought for a moment, and then answered with earnestness in the language of his trade: "'Pears to me they all come in bulk." This plain man was near the center of profoundest truth where learned men have split hairs to little purpose and to much confusion. The feeling of the saved man is this: I was blind, he touched my eyes and now I see; I was dead, he spoke the life-giving word and now I live in him. It is the same with all classes, though some may apprehend more clearly than others.

Gathering up what God has done, and what the heart has experienced, and putting all into one, we call it *salvation,* and salvation is what the believer has when he comes to baptism. He is saved, knows that he is saved, and rejoices in his salvation; has all this in believing and has it forever. In his faith he comes into

union with Christ, and is one with him. Having Christ, he has all Christ can give. Hence these Scriptures:

> "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned. Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Is born from above; born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Being justified by faith. The children of God through faith in Christ. If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

So it is everywhere in the word of God, that believing in Christ brings salvation. And the believer comes to baptism a saved man and with this new condition. Baptism does not make it, and cannot help to make it. It is the new condition indeed that brings him to baptism. He comes to the ordinance in loyalty to Christ, in obedience to his word, to give expression to the experience of his heart, to make public profession of faith in Christ, and is buried with Christ in baptism and raised up again to walk in newness of life. Only the believer can come to baptism; and only baptism (immersion) can give in picture adequate expression to the wonderful work of grace which he has experienced in Jesus Christ. He comes to baptism not to get something, but to give something—not to get salvation, but because he loves, believes, is saved, and finds joy in obedience.

### Facing the Form and the Formula.

2. The form of the ordinance and the formula in its administration are both given us in high example. The baptismal form (immersion) and formula are from God. They were not devised by man, and should not be altered by him in any way. Any attempt at change only mars their beauty and infringes upon divine authority. They were given for all believers, and have held the same wonderful meaning throughout the centuries.

The *form* of the ordinance, generally but wrongly called the "mode of baptism," was set by John when he baptized in the Jordan and at Enon, where he found much water. He was sent of God to baptize, and Jesus came to his baptism and was immersed in the Jordan like the multitudes who flocked to the new and wondrous rite. The baptismal *formula* has its setting from Jesus himself, when in perpetuating the form of baptism, which he had himself received in the Jordan, he commanded for all succeeding ages that the believer be baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Both form and formula were set for the believer, and must be kept together for the fulfillment of the high and august words which have come down to us from our Lord. Both form and formula demand a heart condition which is possible only with the believer as already described. All others of necessity are excluded by the very words of command. This settles forever the question of who should

be baptized. The baptismal formula is definite and powerful, both in its requirement and in its limitation. We dare not abridge or infringe. Here the believer is face to face with his Lord, to declare in action what has been done for his soul.

Moreover, immersion is the *only form* of baptism that will answer either the believer's condition of heart or the believer's purpose as to his new life. He wishes to say something in his baptism, to give expression in figure and symbol to certain heart experiences and beliefs and hopes. In this act of baptism he wishes to say before all the world, (1) that he believes that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again; (2) that he himself once dead in sins has been raised up in Christ Jesus; (3) that he parts with his old life and enters upon a new life to the glory of God; (4) that he believes in the future resurrection of the dead; (5) that here and now he declares his allegiance to Jesus Christ by following his example and obeying his command in this appointed way. Nothing but immersion can tell all this; and immersion does tell it simply, fully, gloriously.

For this reason the form of baptism is made simple and clear in the word of God; and immersion as the Christian rite alone answers the word in which Christ gave his command, and is of universal acceptance among Christians. And no one who has been immersed ever becomes dissatisfied with his baptism on account of its form. It is to him the answer of a good conscience toward God, and expresses in great fullness and beauty all that he has experienced in his heart in pass-

ing from death unto life. While on the other hand it is a common occurrence that persons "baptized by other modes" become dissatisfied, feel in their hearts they have not followed their Lord's high example, or kept his word of command, or answered the demand of their conscience, or given expression to the deep experiences and new hopes of their hearts. So they must either break away from their old alignment to rectify the wrong, or go through life with misgivings of heart and compunction of conscience. The form and the formula speak the same thing, impose the same obligation, and foretoken the same glorious and joyous consummation.

### Baptism, the Believer's Privilege.

3. God has by his own appointment put great honor upon this simple ordinance. He has given it a place of exceptional distinction in his kingdom, and has made it a kind of uniform or royal badge in the family of those that are redeemed through faith in the Lord Jesus. Here man honors God; and here also God honors man.

In putting on a uniform there is distinction both in the uniform and also in what it stands for with the man to whom it is given. It does not make one a soldier; yet it marks him as a soldier, stands for the nation's honor, and demands high order of soldiership in his life. So with those in the army of our King who put on Christ by baptism.

The nation's flag as a piece of common bunting adds

nothing to either the beauty or equipment or fighting force of the great man-of-war, above which it is unfurled to the breeze. And yet, out on the highway of the seas and wherever the ship goes throughout the world, that flag represents all the nation stands for, and its honor is the nation's honor whether given or received. So baptism ought always to mark one whose citizenship is in heaven.

The baptized are an honored class, and stand separate in the world, committed to the highest and noblest life. God has dealt with them, dealt with them individually, and in a way at once gracious and marvelous. A glorious work of grace has been wrought in their hearts. They are the children of the King—not because they are baptized, but baptized because they were his children through faith in Jesus Christ. And their baptism shadows forth all the mighty work which grace has wrought both in devising and executing the wondrous scheme of redemption. Wherever baptism comes, true, genuine baptism, there grace has come beforehand; has wrought its work and now gives to the world this exhibition of its achievement, when the believer is buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also he is risen again to live a new life to the glory of God. Manifestly there are those for whom baptism was not intended, to whom the ordinance means nothing, and for whom it has no value. Some came to John for baptism, but with his discerning eye he marked them in the thronging multitude, and sent them away as not worthy of the sacred rite, that they might first have

the inward condition and bring forth fruit meet for repentance. Simon Magus was baptized with others—their baptism being genuine, but his being false and perpetrating a fearful falsehood, though no doubt he was immersed and so had the form of our Lord's baptism. There was not, preceding his baptism, the right condition of heart in the sight of God that gives the special right to the ordinance.

It is a fearful misnomer to call an immersion baptism when either the subject is wrong or when the design is wrong. And worse than misnomer, to bring or admit to baptism those who are not in line with scriptural requirement. It becomes all concerned to bar the ordinance about with every possible precaution and protection, and see that it is kept in the form and only for those for whom alone it is intended. Baptism is for a class; it is the exclusive privilege of believers. No others are admitted to its sacred precincts; but for the believer the way is wide open and lit up by the splendor from the other world.

The baptism of the jailer that night at Philippi was a remarkable event. It told wonderful things that had been wrought in his heart and home; it opened a new line of belief and life for him and his household, that has been a wonder to the world; it awakened a new joy and song of rejoicing in God. Baptized as his Lord had been, he reproduced the august scene of the Jordan, commemorated the resurrection of Jesus, declared his new heart and life, put himself in harmony with the great doctrine of the Trinity, and forecast in

hope the coming resurrection of the dead. What a marvelous change it all was, and all coming in so short a time! The sun had set upon him and his in their lost estate, and rose next morning to find him and his ministering to the saints, rejoicing in their new hope and believing in God.

It is a wonderful scene, but not exceptional. It has a beautiful duplicate in the story of Philip's preaching to the eunuch of Ethiopia.

> "As they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8: 36-39.)

What doth hinder me?—that is the word of the heart in the strength and ardor of new love. And from the days of the jailer at Philippi and of the Ethiopian eunuch until now, the believer has found gladness and joy in his baptism.

In all my Lord's appointed ways,
  My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much-loved saints,
  For I must go with you.

Thro' floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
  I'll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not! shall be my cry,
  Whatever shall oppose.

Thro' duty, and thro' trial too,
I'll go at his command;
Hinder me not, for I am bound
For my Immanuel's land.

### Baptism, the Believer's Obligation.

4. While magnifying and rejoicing in baptism as an exalted privilege, we must never forget that it is also a duty. The law of baptism is positive and imperative as any law God ever gave, and as binding now as when first commanded. Disobedience here is like the disobedience of other laws; obedience here like the obedience of other laws. "In keeping of them there is great reward." Standing true to duty, even the sternest and most trying duty, begets a sense, an air of freedom, and of lofty triumph, and of joy, and sometimes of rapturous joy. And so the obedience in baptism, as meeting a high and solemn obligation, awakes the song of gladness in the believer's heart.

This arises in part from his new-found hope and life in the Lord Jesus, but in part also from the sense of obedience as he humbly and faithfully does what Christ has commanded and follows the example of his Lord, going as he went and doing as he did. To be baptized as Jesus was baptized is at once an inexpressible honor, a solemn and imperative duty, and gives a joy that springs in the soul from the touch it has had with heaven. The believer comes under the law of baptism, but it is a law, like all the laws of God, intended for his well-being. And its faithful observ-

ance makes for order and good government in the kingdom of God and in the life of his people. It is not optional with the believer, but positive and imperative.

> "If ye love me keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me he will keep my words. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 14: 15, 21, 23, 24; 15: 10, 14.)

These words of our Lord reveal the foundation of the law of baptism and uncover the very motive and spring of the believer's obedience. The law of baptism is the law of love, and no law is more imperative or imperious than the law of love. Here is the very seat of the new government which Jesus came to establish. We dare for him, or do for him, or die for him, or live for him, and all *because we love him.* There is absolutely nothing more commanding or more exacting than this high law of love; and almost no obedience that awakens a more gladsome joy.

Baptism is essential, not to salvation, for it appeals to the believer who is already saved and in love with his Lord, but essential to obedience of his law, essential as a manifestation of love, essential to loyalty in the kingdom where grace reigns, essential for outward expression of the experiences of the heart. Disobedience here is unfaithfulness to oneself as well as dis-

loyalty to his King. The mightiest law in God's universe is the law of love; and the highest obedience is the obedience of love—an obedience which flows from the heart out into the life, as water flows from the fountain out into the plain.

I recall a startling occasion in an early pastorate. A young lady in my Bible class professed conversion and gave evidence of a genuine work of grace. Her mother, at the head of an elegant home, though a professing Christian and member of the church, prevented the daughter from being baptized. Some six months later the daughter became seriously ill, and rapidly grew worse day by day. After some days of anxious waiting I was summoned to her bed-side with the word that she was dying. I entered the room just as the rays of the morning sun were breaking through the open window upon the sorrowful scene. I will never forget the greeting of that dying girl, nor the look of those deep searching eyes. "O, I am so sorry I have not been baptized." Words of explanation and comfort were spoken, how that baptism is not essential to salvation, and how one is saved by repentance toward God and simple faith in Jesus Christ. "I know all that," she said, and referred to former conversations and former experiences in which her soul had found untold joy, and then added: "I am not afraid to die. Jesus is my Saviour, and I have given all to him. And yet, I wish I had obeyed his word and followed his example." That was her dying testimony, and she went away to be with God.

Many years have come and gone since then, and yet the words of that dear child are still ringing in my soul. Will we never learn that obedience is better than sacrifice? To do what God says is the safest life, the highest life, the only life for him who believes in Jesus Christ. As these words pass from pen to paper I wonder if perchance they will fall under the eye of some who see their duty plain and clear, but refuse to walk in God's way. O! my reader, listen to that highest of all voices; this is the way, walk ye in it; ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you; if ye love me, keep my commandments. Boast not of salvation if Jesus be not your King and your acknowledged Lord, and his law imperative and masterful in your soul.

### The More Insistent View.

Baptism of the believer—what a great, great theme it is! Baptism is just the same now in form and spirit and purpose and lofty obligation, as when John baptized in the Jordan, as when Christ commanded to baptize "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," as when the disciples baptized on Pentecost, or at Philippi, or at any other place where men heard the Gospel and believed in Christ as Saviour and Lord. There is no change in the facts of the Gospel, or in the doctrines of the Gospel, or in the ordinances of the Gospel. These are the same now and forever. Baptism means just as much to us, as to the jailer, or to the eunuch, or to our Lord. And to

preserve it, and observe it, as Christ commanded is a special and exalted obligation binding on all who love him.

There is even pressing, urgent need for the larger, more precise, and more insistent view. We cannot do here as we please, or even think as we please, except as we please to do what will please our Lord. The ordinances are at the very heart of organic and constructive Christianity. Infringement on them means infringement on the organic law of the kingdom. They are not matters of small moment, but are commanding in every sense of the word, and demand obedience and loyalty to Jesus Christ as our Saviour and our King.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE BELIEVER'S RISEN LIFE.

THE *believer* in Christ is the great New Testament designation and distinction for those who are his. The believer and the unbeliever represent the two classes among men, the one saved because he has believed on the Son, the other condemned already because he hath not believed on the only begotten Son of God. The believer is in Christ as the branch is in the vine, and is accepted in the Beloved. What he has, he has because he is *in Christ;* and being in Christ, he has all that Christ has and can give.

#### Its Basis and Definition.

1. The believer has wonderful pre-eminence in his risen life. He has been adjudged in Christ, and by the highest court in the universe, and is forgiven and justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses; he is a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. Christ is in him the hope of glory—formed or forming in him the hope of glory; and he is changed into the same image from glory to glory; and is kept by the power of God

through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

He comes into this exalted and blessed relation by faith—believing in Christ as his Saviour, committing to him his eternal interest, and believing in God, who hath raised him from the dead. There is nothing in all the word of God higher or nobler or more blessed than this. By the risen life of the believer is meant his new heart-life and new world-life, which having its genesis and development in the heart through the faith of the operation of God, works its way outward and gives a life which should be of the highest and noblest character. He is in the world, but not of it. His citizenship is in heaven, and he is Christ's representative among men, is set for the defense of the Gospel, and is to be a blessing to the world. Living here he yet has his heart and home on high.

Here we come into the inner courts of the Gospel, as to its genius and purpose, its intensest and most practical activities. The risen life of the believer may be called the Holy of holies in the Christian system, as regards its power to give life, to make character in every grade and class of men, and to shape the conduct and course of human lives. In Christ as the branches are in the vine, so also they do honor to God and gladden the world in bearing much fruit.

This risen life may be considered in its origin and author, in its manifestation and resources of power, in its activities and hopes and consummation. Concerning it the word of God speaks with great clearness

and force, leaving no room for mistake, and looking to the ages to come when God shall show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." (John 5: 25.)

"That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. 1: 18-20.)

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 2: 12; 3: 1, 3, 4.)

"Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3: 2.)

These Scriptures are collated as setting out the basis and character and outlook of the *risen life* of the believer. Surely they are wonderful words with amazing scope of thought and sweep of expression. They come both from the Master and the Master's disciples. Though brought together from a wide range of Scripture, they yet present agreement and unity and continuity, not only in expression, but also in thinking, and in that deeper experience which lies even beneath thinking in the great undercurrent of heart and life.

Here again baptism is given a royal place among these lofty utterances. In figure and symbol it is made to stand for the mighty work which God has wrought in the believer's heart and life. The believer is buried with Christ in baptism, is also risen with him—and if risen with him, then he has a backward look to what has been done, an outward look as to life and conduct, an upward look for joy and inspiration and future coronation. The risen life of the believer is a glorious reality with baptism made conspicuous by its sublime setting forth of the wonderful works of God.

### Real Life from Real Death.

2. There is nothing figurative in these terms, life and death. They stand for tremendous realities—spiritual life and spiritual death, and the further fact of transition, of passing from death into life. That is precisely the case of the believer; the life he now lives, he lives because of his resurrection from the dead, and his life is a risen life. This is true concerning the new life within, and that gives new life without.

Everywhere in the word of God the sinners' condition is described as a condition of death. They are dead in trespasses and in sins; they are dead—not physically, not intellectually, not even morally—they walk, they think, their conscience is more or less active, and yet they are *spiritually* dead, dead to God, to righteousness, to holiness.

One may be blind, and therefore dead to all charm and beauty of nature and art, while alive and interested in other things; one may be deaf, and therefore dead to sound—unmoved, untouched by the plaintive wails or the merry laughter or the loftiest strains of rapturous music—with silence and sound all one to him, though alive in other respects. One may be alive also in many respects and in reference to many things, while yet dead to spiritual things—dead religiously; dead to Christ and sees no beauty in him that he should desire him; dead to God and so unmindful to calls of mercy, unmoved by either severity or goodness. There is death in his heart; and if there be any risen life for him, there must first come a quickening and a resurrection from the dead. This is just as true of the believer's life here as of his life hereafter. Physical death requires physical resurrection; spiritual death requires spiritual raising up with Christ.

If we could apprehend the sinner's condition as God sees it and knows it, we would perhaps be startled and even appalled. To us his condition would be utterly undone and hopeless. Nothing is gained by shutting our eyes to this condition, or in trying to picture it as less terrible than is presented in the word of God, or in trying to reach it by remedies in human devices and appliances.

If we once get a clear view of what is done in bringing deliverance from death here, and in bringing the risen life out of this condition, the way will be easy for belief in the physical resurrection of the dead. The

believer is alive—alive from the dead, and his risen life is a blessed, joyous fact. This is the change that has come; he has passed from death unto life. There has been a resurrection just as real, just as wonderful, just as difficult, as the resurrection which shall be accomplished in the final day. We do not depreciate that, but emphasize this. In Christ the believer is made alive through faith in him.

### The Faith of the Operation of God.

3. The risen life is through the faith of the operation of God. God works in man to will and to do. The divine and the human come into conjunction, and marvelous things are done. Herein is the glory of God, that he can do such things in us.

> "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith." (Eph. 2: 4-6, 8.)

The word of God deals freely and easily with great, startling paradoxes—statements which seem contradictions, but which are harmonious beyond the reach of human wisdom. They are submitted to our faith, and we are left to believe and wonder and adore. Why should we complain, if in his own chosen way God works out his glorious results to our everlasting salvation and crown of rejoicing? The dead hear; the

sinner lives while he is yet dead; the believer is dead and yet alive—dead and his life is hid with Christ in God. But why be disturbed about paradoxes when God is at work? when in the field of his operation there are the mightiest forces which he has revealed to us as described in the words already quoted—viz., the voice of the Son of God—exceeding greatness of power—the working of his mighty power—the same power which wrought in Christ when God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. With these infinite forces in operation we may with all confidence say, God can of these stones raise up children unto Abraham. And how much more can he lay hold on human souls now dead in trespasses and sins, and quicken them and raise them up with Christ to live with him!

God is at work saving the lost as was manifested when Christ was on earth. The dead heard his voice then; and they that were dead were made alive again, raised up by the wondrous voice of the Son of God, whether the daughter of Jairus just dead, or the widow's son being borne to the burial, or Lazarus four days dead and in his grave. The voice that reached their ears and started again the beating of their hearts, sounds down in the sinner's soul and he lives.

In making hearts new, in raising one up with Christ, God puts out the same power with which Christ himself was raised from the dead. It is called "the exceeding greatness of his power," it operates "to usward

who believe," and we are said to believe "according to the mighty working," and it is the working "which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." Herein is a wonderful thing; God at work in human hearts—more wonderful than even the making of worlds—a new creation more wonderful than the first creation—a second birth more wonderful than the first birth—a new life more wonderful than the old life—a raising up again unsurpassed in power and wonder and glory even by the resurrection yet to be.

In magnifying this work as the work of God—the operation of God, there is no infringement on human accountability, no abridgment of man's responsibility. On the divine side it is the *operation of God,* while on the human side it is by *man's faith* of the operation of God—the power is to usward *who believe.* And the risen life is the risen life of *the believer.*

Somehow beyond our comprehension, Lazarus dead —four days dead and in his grave—and yet took hold on the voice of the Son of God when that wondrous, wondrous voice took hold on him—as the steel without life takes hold of the magnet full of life. Somehow, also, down in the human soul God's operation takes hold on *our faith,* and our faith in response to his touch takes hold on his operation, and we live—are alive from the dead, risen with him through the faith of the operation of God.

Here we come within the most holy precincts where God is saving men, is working both to will and to do, and where man is working out his own salvation with

fear and trembling. It is *the believer* who is born again, born not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God; he that *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; he that heareth his voice and *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Though dead in trespasses and in sins, they that hear shall live. It is life—life from the dead—the risen life of the believer. And it is life through the faith of the operation of God.

### Gloriously Set Forth in Baptism.

4. Not wrought but manifested, not effected but exhibited in this ordinance. And herein the ordinance comes to its exalted distinction by revealing and disclosing in outward form this mighty working of God in the human soul. An outward symbol and expression of that life which is hid with Christ in God.

It is worth repeating here, and with fresh emphasis, that God made baptism and set it as a symbol in his kingdom. As much so as he made the stars and set them in the heavens. And both stars and baptism declare his glory and show his handiwork. God made baptism, not as a ceremony to work results in the human heart, but as a form to show in picture what he is himself doing with his own mighty power in making the believer alive from the dead, and to give out-

ward expression to the new risen life—made this particular form to show this particular thing.

The ordinance, baptism, carries a composite thought and describes a composite act. There must be subject and spirit and design, and also the act of laying one down in the water and lifting him out again, if you wish to have that baptism which God made and gave to John, and which Christ received and commanded. Nothing else will meet the high service to which this ordinance is set. In this act there is immersion and submersion, representing death and burial, first of Christ and then of the believer with him; there is also emersion in being raised up from the water, representing two resurrections from the grave, first of Christ and then of the believer, and representing also that risen life which the believer now has in having been raised up with Christ.

> "We are buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

Baptism means death, and burial, and resurrection—symbolizes and shows in a picture these mighty facts, whether taking place with Christ or in the experience of the human heart when one believes in Jesus as his Saviour. It is a kind of mirror into which the believer looks and sees reflected and mirrored in marvelous

precision and sublime beauty what has taken place in his heart through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him up with Christ. For this reason among others, the believer is satisfied with baptism in the form of immersion, and finds in it the answer of a good conscience toward God and a figure of his being saved by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Here is illustrated too how the risen life of the believer precedes his baptism and is no part of his baptism. Else there is nothing within to be represented without. First the original and then the image.

Like the human eye, baptism out of its sphere disjoints everything and is horrid to look upon, but in its place and held to its original form and purpose, is full of charm and beauty and significance and service. It came from God, is stamped with his mark, shows his work, and is his workmanship, making glorious display of his grace.

## Necessarily Immersion in Form.

In the New Testament baptism is clearly, and even necessarily, *the immersion of believers.* Everything indicates this and emphasizes this—the Saviour's immersion in the Jordan, the very word used in commanding baptism, the references to the ordinance whether incidental or direct, and also its resemblance in form to those wonderful facts and doctrines which it is set to symbolize, and does symbolize, in a way so significant and beautiful.

Moreover, baptism as immersion of the believer is coming more and more after years of conflict to be the judgment and testimony of the best scholarship of today, regardless of denominational name. This shows itself in scholarly exposition of the Scriptures; and the great expositors are now simply saying what the common people always feel in reading the New Testament for themselves. They see immersion and only immersion. And as the meaning of the ordinance is largely in its form, so its very form becomes at once its significance and sublime beauty.

In a recent book* the author, Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy, himself a Presbyterian of high standing, writes as follows:

> "Baptism is, indeed, a vivid picture or illustration of the saving process. On the one hand, it sets forth the unseen experiences which are attained through faith. As the baptized person is plunged out of sight in the water, and then rises out of the cleansing element a member of the Christian community, so does the believer, who by faith appropriates the benefits of Christ's atoning death and resurrection, pass out of contact with the sinful life of the flesh, annulled on the cross, and rise in fellowship with the risen Lord to newness of life in the Spirit.
>
> "But, obviously, the picture also symbolizes the relation of the believer to the Spirit. For all that has happened to him in the experience of salvation, his death to sin (immersion beneath the water), and his entrance upon a new life (emergence from the water), is really accomplished for him in response to his faith, accomplished by the divine operation; is the work, as St. Paul puts it, of the Holy Spirit."

* Paul's Conception of the Last Things, delivered first as The Cunningham Lectures before the Free Church College of Edinburgh.

This is the language of devout learning and scholarship in almost its most recent expression. It speaks with clear, ringing emphasis for the form of baptism, and for that form being essential to its meaning. The Christian world both in learning and in common judgment not only concede, but are insisting, that *immersion* is the one necessary form of New Testament baptism—and this too almost regardless of denominational distinction. Indeed, viewed otherwise its wonderful meaning disappears.

While this makes a powerful and unanswerable plea for the form of baptism always maintained by our people, yet this is not the purpose of its introduction here. But the insistence here is for the noble and beautiful service of the ordinance in setting out the risen life of the believer. That service is in its form, and the glories of heaven are upon the believer's baptism wherein as a symbol he is buried with Christ and wherein also he is risen with him. The august scene of the Jordan is reproduced, and that marvelous word is heard again, This is my beloved Son. Herein is the majesty of baptism and its moral greatness.

### Inspiration and Commanding Outlook.

Baptism has a language all its own. It is an oath of allegiance that is ever binding; it is a profession of faith in a buried and risen Christ; and back of all this it stands for a mighty spiritual revolution. It de-

clares that the believer, once dead in sin, is now—even now—made alive and is risen from the dead.

Our Lord began his life-mission, so far as concerns his public ministry, with his baptism in the Jordan. "Thenceforth there lay before him trials and labors and sufferings and conflict and death, with ultimate triumph and enthronement and coronation." And "for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

So also the believer, in his risen life, like his Lord in baptism, sets his face to the future for the life that now is and for the life that is to follow. In his risen life he demonstrates in personal experience God's power to save, demonstrates also the resurrection of Jesus and certifies the risen Christ. He is complete in Christ, and Christ becomes to him all and in all. He lives in Christ, and Christ lives in him. He is a living pledge for the final triumph of the Son of God and through him of all that are his. In a marvelous way, such as must be a constant wonder even to the angels, Christ has bound himself and the believer into one—an inseparable union; one in life here, one in destiny hereafter. Nothing can separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus his Lord.

If then ye be risen with Christ—*since then ye are risen with Christ,* as shown in your baptism wherein

ye were buried and are raised up again; that is the key word, "risen with Christ," the basal word, the word describing what has come to pass in the heart, and also the word prospective. The believer finds the basis of his risen life in Christ on the cross, and the inspiration of his new life in Christ on the throne. He sees within the veil and anchors there. He dedicates his life to Christ and to the fulfillment of Christ's mission. As Christ was sent into the world, even so also he is sent into the world. The deepest and richest and most powerful thought of his heart is that Christ died for him to save him from sin, and rose again for him, and is now at the right hand of God in his behalf—his Intercessor, who ever liveth to make intercession for him. His supreme joy and glory is to live to the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

> "Set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Now are we the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

How the heart is moved by the mighty sweep of these majestic words, and by their commanding outlook for the believer! *Salvation is now present* for him that believes—and is progressive also, and all the while progressing and coming nearer than when he first believed. But none can tell the fullness of its glories and joys when consummated and realized in the presence of the King. Oh, to see him as he is, and

to be like him, crowned with glory and honor at his own right hand!

This in all the fullness of its meaning is the flower and fruitage of the risen life. We await the coming day. A far-away prospect as yet, but a prospect crowned with the splendor of even far-off glories. The believer looks within and finds much of conflict, much also of fear, and finds round about him also much that hinders and that seems out of accord with the joy and glories which are to come. Still he gets rich foretaste of the full harvest, and keeps his affections set above, where Christ sits in the heavenly places.

"Our Lord is *now* rejected,
And by the world disowned,
By the *many* still neglected,
And by the *few* enthroned,
But soon he'll come in glory,
The hour is drawing nigh,
For the crowning day is coming by and by.

"Oh, the crowning day is coming,
Is coming by and by,
When our Lord shall come in power
And 'glory' from on high.
Oh, the glorious sight shall gladden
Each waiting, watchful eye,
In the crowning day that's coming by and by!"

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day; and am kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

The Milky Way, stretching in brightness across the

heavens and as seen by the unaided eye, appears hardly more than so much star-dust. But as seen through a glass of moderate magnifying power, the stars separate, stand apart each in its own place; with an increase in magnifying power of the glass, they stand apart even more, become larger, and are seen as centers of separate systems; finally with magnifying power increased, the glory becomes greater and the stars stand off as making *an opening through the heavens,* then you look right *through* and on beyond the stars into depths of infinite distances. No one has yet dared to say what wonders might appear if only we had a magnifying glass of sufficient reach and power.

Baptism appears to some very commonplace—too ordinary to enlist much attention. But to the eye of faith, and with the devout student, the ordinance takes on new meaning, assumes new rank, sets out great doctrines transcendent in themselves and more transcendent in conjunction with each other. We look to see what is *in* baptism, and there we read its wonderful story of the past, and there too we see something of the wonders of the present work of grace. But why not a larger faith? Why not give our faith larger range and reach until we look right *through the ordinance*—see not only what is in it, but also looking through and beyond where there are depths on depths, and glory on glory, up to the very throne of God? There in the fullness of time God shall uncover the things which he has prepared for them that love him,

and the glory of what we see now shall be done away by reason of the glory that excelleth.

"Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die;
They view the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

"When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

# CHAPTER XI.

## THE LORD'S BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him; and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark 1: 9-11.)

"And Jesus said, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28: 19, 20.)

"The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11: 23-26.)

THESE Scriptures appeal strongly to our heart and imagination and loyalty. Here we come face to face with the only two ordinances in the Gospel—the Lord's baptism and the Lord's Supper, presented to us in great force and significance. They are the Lord's because they were observed by him, appointed by him, commanded by him, set by him in the churches to teach and emphasize certain great facts and doctrines concerning himself. One came at the

opening and the other at the close of his public life. Having himself observed them both he perpetuated them in his churches and for those who are his.

They are in the churches, placed by him in the churches—in each individual, local body of believers, entrusted to its care to serve noble and sublime purposes within the circle of its own membership; the one an introduction of members upon a profession of personal faith in a personal Saviour, the other a service often repeated among the members in recognition and memory of their Lord and of their relation to him and to his death. And it is of immense importance that these two ordinances should be held as they were first placed, and held in their integrity and purity, and preserved in the unique and lofty purpose for which they were given. Every departure from this mars their beauty, mars their exalted character, and does violence to the very word and appointment and commandment of our Lord.

It is very significant that Christ gave his followers only these two ordinances, each simple in the extreme, and yet beautiful, wonderfully sublime and impressive in its meaning and service. Through all the years and centuries they have come down to us, losing nothing of force, nothing of their rare charm, but like the sun and the seasons fresh with every return. They have now precisely the same meaning and bear undimmed our Lord's superscription and image, as when he first observed them and spoke the words that fixed

them in his churches to serve unto the end when he shall come again.

This gives these ordinances exceptional distinction in the kingdom of God. Judaism had passed, or was passing away, with its system of elaborate and almost gorgeous rites and ceremonies. And in contrast and comparison these two simple ordinances—the Lord's baptism and the Lord's Supper—were appointed, not as substitutes for those ceremonies or in any sense taking their place, and yet serving their own high mission—as if God should blot out all the stars from the firmament, and then set two others, and only two, which should serve as sentinels in the night-watch of the ages. In the same exalted way, and perhaps with even greater emphasis, he has put honor upon baptism and the supper, and committed them to the care of those who love him and will be faithful in the high trust.

## The New Testament Law.

1. The New Testament must govern concerning these two ordinances of the new dispensation. In all questions arising here settlement must be made by appeals to this new law. Not to family relations—not to men, however learned and wise and good—not to tradition, though dignified as church history—not to custom, personal comfort, or private preference or convenience—not even to the Old Testament Scriptures.

Baptism and the Supper are New Testament ordinances, and all questions concerning them must there-

fore be settled by the New Testament law. If it be silent, silence best becomes us; if it command, verily "to obey is better than sacrifice." We have no right even to think as we please about baptism and the supper. Here private right and individual duty coincide; it is at once our right and our duty to study the New Testament for ourselves and so find out what we must think and do concerning these high matters which God is requiring at our hands, and for which each one must give account in personal obedience.

There is a fixed order between these two ordinances. It is this, baptism and the supper, not the supper and baptism. They come to us from our Lord in this order, and are so stamped with his authority. This order is of universal acceptance by all denominations of Christians, an individual here and there dissenting, as being the order authorized and commanded in the New Testament.

There is no authority for inviting or admitting the unbaptized to the supper. There is fundamental law against it. A father who was pastor of a Baptist church received his own daughter for membership upon a profession of faith. At the same service, and immediately after she had been received, the Lord's Supper was administered. Of course the father did not invite even his own child to the Lord's Supper. She had not yet been baptized, and baptism precedes the supper, and she could not take of the Lord's Supper until she had first been baptized with the Lord's baptism. This is no unkind discrimination against her

or disparagement of her experience or profession, and preserves the Gospel order as interpreted by all.

The prerequisites, prescribed and required as understood and stated, at least nominally, by all the creeds and confessions of faith, are these—namely, profession of faith in Jesus, baptism, and church membership. This covers what is commonly, but erroneously, called "close communion." It is the Baptist view of the Lord's baptism in its relation to the Lord's Supper. There is no difference between Baptists and others, either in the principles or the prerequisites or the order. We simply insist that the Lord's baptism and the Lord's Supper must be observed as the Lord requires. The issue between us and others really concerns baptism, and this issue in its last analysis is a question of much moment. It is a question not of "how much water," not about "going to one place by different routes," but simply and earnestly a question of obedience. We ought to understand this issue and insist upon the principle of obeying the commandments of our Lord.

Christ has put restriction on these ordinances; before baptism there must be faith; before the supper there must be baptism. Baptism is the privilege of believers, and the supper is the privilege of baptized believers who are walking orderly before the Lord and among their brethren. Restriction of baptism means restriction of the supper, and the law, as interpreted by all, means the restriction of both ordinances.

There seems to be a fundamental reason for the

order in which these two ordinances come. Baptism indicates the beginning of the new life, and so comes first and at the beginning—and only once. The supper marks the maintenance and continuance of life, and so comes after and is of frequent repetition. Baptism as a symbol shows spiritual life to be connected with Christ in its beginning; the supper shows spiritual life to be connected with Christ in its continuance. In baptism we have a picture of being quickened into new life; in the supper a picture of the new life feeding on Christ—as when the daughter of Jairus was raised from the dead, they set refreshments before her. There is no need for the supper until after baptism—no need of feeding life until there be the sign of life begun. Displacing the ordinances disarranges the system and destroys their beauty and meaning. Baptism first, and afterwards the supper.

### Their Relation to Heart Religion.

2. There is no antagonism and nothing incompatible between genuine heart religion and these two beautiful ordinances. One cannot be a substitute for the other, as water and bread and wine cannot be a substitute for life. Indeed comparisons, prejudicial to the ordinances, or detrimental to their dignity and significance and importance, must be avoided. "Which is the more important?" is not a proper question. Which is more important, eating or sleeping? the beating of the heart or the bellows-like movement of the

lungs? There are no "non-essentials" in Christ's kingdom. Things may be of tremendous moment and importance—each in its own place—and yet have no antagonism or even comparison with each other.

It is very important and yet rather difficult to hold the externals of religion in their proper relation to the internal—the outward observance in its proper relation to the inner experiences of the heart. A right condition of heart in the sight of God is surely of paramount importance; indeed without this first, nothing else can be taken into account nor be of any value. And yet heart religion *is not everything;* indeed it demands in its very nature some other things in the outward life as an external observance.

Baptism and the supper may be called the externals of the Gospel system—but not non-essentials. There is no saving efficacy in either of them, or in the two together. But who will venture to say that these ordinances are non-essential or of little moment in the kingdom of God? A five-hundred-dollar note is not worth ten hundred dollars; but it is not therefore worthless nor of little consequence. Baptism and the supper have a value of their own, and bear the signet of the Master's authority, and hold really an exalted place in his kingdom and service. They cannot save, and yet to leave them undone and neglected is a fearful thing. Disobedience is always hurtful and dangerous. If the heart be right, the externals follow as the stream follows the opening of the fountain. Obedience

is of immense moment as the intelligent expression of a right heart.

The true relation between heart religion and the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, including baptism and the supper, finds a clear, strong statement in the word of God:

> "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; *that they may walk* in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them." (Ez. 11: 19, 20.)

Be sure your heart is right in the sight of God; be sure also that you "walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1: 6.) It is not of the spirit of heart religion to belittle or neglect the outward in the Lord's appointments. Those who love him most find most their meat and drink in doing his will.

### Of Equal Rank and Importance.

3. Out of comparison with heart religion, baptism and the supper are also out of comparison with each other as to merit and value. They are both externals, ordinances and commandments of the Lord, are of equal rank in his kingdom and of equal importance, each in its own sphere and purpose in his service, and mark the outer life of those who love him and desire to honor him.

This equal rank is recognized in all the public and authoritative utterances of the different denominations.

Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and all others, so far as their creeds are known to me, hold baptism and the supper of equal importance. And if there be any preference in the *printed creed,* it is rather for the ordinance of baptism. Throughout these pages also baptism has been magnified and exalted, holding as it manifestly does a high place in the great system. But baptism has no place above the supper, and the supper has no place above baptism. It is enough of honor and dignity and exalted character for either, to say they are of equal rank and importance.

There has grown up among Christians a sentiment concerning the supper that is richer, more tender, more touched with awe than the prevalent feeling concerning baptism. It is counted of more importance, is talked of with hushed breath and moistened eye, while baptism, despite its great place in the creeds and its high place in the New Testament, is much disregarded, and sometimes becomes even the subject of jest and jibe. *This is wrong.* Let there be no lowering of sentiment concerning the supper, but an elevation of sentiment and conversation concerning baptism, a faithful holding them in full harmony with their moral dignity and high standing in the service of the Lord.

They are associate ordinances, and rest upon precisely the same authority—the commandment of God; they are equally positive institutions, governed by positive law from which there must be no deviation and no change; they were shown no preference over one another by Christ in word or action. He observed

both; he appointed both; he commanded both; he set them both in high places, and charged them with great and glorious meaning, to stand among his people for their observance to the end of time.

They are equal in their symbolic import. We are buried with Christ in baptism, and so express our faith in a risen Christ, and declare our new life through his resurrection and our union with him. We partake of the supper and so declare our participation by faith in his death and atonement. In their symbolism they stand separately and distinctively for the greatest paradox in the word of God, showing *the Lord's death* till he come. They are both monuments, together and separately commemorating the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. They give monumental evidence of these great facts, and bear testimony to our oneness with him and our life in him. They are alike beautiful and full of meaning—telling at once of his risen glory and of the greater glory when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. We must not discriminate where Christ himself, by precept and example and doctrinal significance, has united and honored these two ordinances.

### Must be Kept for Christ.

4. As his ordinances Christ has left them in our keeping. They are visible expressions of invisible realities, living mementos of things that have been, and wonderfully prophetic of things yet to be. Our

very loyalty to Christ almost reduces itself to our loyalty in his ordinances. What we do with them will indicate what we do with him. To honor his ordinances is to honor him; to preserve them and to obey them is to be loyal to him. There is enrichment of soul and immense gain to the outer life in cultivating the spirit of obedience and the sense of obligation to Christ in the outward things he has commanded.

Baptism and the supper are in danger from two entirely different things—namely, the spirit of controversy and the spirit of "Christian liberality," so called. At times and places controversy has caused the people to disregard the ordinances, or to talk of them only in the spirit and language of strife. Indeed baptism and the supper have caused the fiercest conflicts through the centuries, and today are foremost in causing divisions among the followers of Christ. This is a source of regret, and yet shows the immense importance of the ordinances and the earnest conviction and purpose to withstand any infringement on their exalted character and to maintain them as our Lord gave them to his people. Controversy may be bad, especially when conducted in an unchristian spirit, and yet better this by far than unfaithfulness to Christ and Christ's laws and ordinances. Any surrender here, or compromise of any kind, would be traitorous to Christ, and disastrous to his truth and to his ordinances as expressing great truth.

The danger at this time lies in the other direction, when men plead for "Christian liberality," and Chris-

tian union, and a surrender of convictions or an abridgment of the outward in religion.

My sympathies lie along the line of a broad Christian fellowship with all who bear the Master's name and show the Master's spirit. But "Christian Union" not intelligently grounded, not wisely stated, or pressed too far, is certainly detrimental if not destructive of the ordinances of Christ. There is a difference between denominations, and it concerns the ordinances largely, and it is not a difference concerning trifles. It must be respected, and is not to be overridden by the anything-you-please spirit which sometimes shows itself. There are some things on which "Christian liberty" must not lay its hands—some things which "Christian liberality" cannot give away. There is earnest and pressing need for profounder conviction of truth and less talk of "it makes no difference." There is need for a higher type of the spirit of Christian brotherhood between denominations, that will recognize and respect the convictions of each other, and that will unite in withstanding the current of "liberal ideas." Christ never prayed for a union among his followers that would set aside or in any way disregard his ordinances. A union that is worth the name must be loyal to him. There is pressing need that every one shall have "the courage of his convictions," but a far more pressing need for convictions of truth that will make one courageous in the matter of law and order in the kingdom of Christ. This is first, always imperial, and even imperious in its high and holy demands.

When pleading at one time for this same high sense of loyalty to Christ, and speaking of the Baptists and their view of communion, Dr. John Hall, one of the foremost Presbyterian preachers in his day, gave out this earnest word:

> "It is doubtful if, considering the length to which liberal ideas have been carried in this country, there be not some gain to the community as a whole, for a large denomination making a stand at a particular point, and reminding their brethren, that, *there are church matters which we are not bound, are not even at liberty to settle according to the popular demand*—as we would settle the route of a railroad."

This emphasis is just, and for a principle that suffers much violence from well-meaning people. Loyalty to Christ is the first consideration. Looseness in obedience at one point will bring looseness elsewhere in the keeping of the law. We cannot settle church matters as we settle railroad matters—simply by convenience and popular preference. Christ's law is the supreme test and should hold all who are his.

### A Serious Violation.

5. Fearful violence has sometimes been done these ordinances. Another example may be cited, quite the opposite from Dr. John Hall, and in almost startling contrast with his loyal spirit and commanding words—viz.: the late Dean Stanley, an Episcopalian of the Church of England. Some years ago, just prior to his death, he published an article on Baptism, in which may

be seen the dangerous tendency concerning the ordinances. After asserting all that Baptists could wish as to "the mode of baptism," he declared there came a "change in the form itself," a change from immersion to sprinkling as baptism.

Earnestly and stoutly he insisted *that immersion was the original form*—the form which Christ observed and commanded, the form which the apostles practiced and enjoined, the form which was almost universally practiced until the beginning of the seventeenth century. Dean Stanley declared for all this, each one specifically and simply as a statement of historical fact in a way that left no room for doubt, and then expressed his sanction and even his pleasure in the change *from immersion to sprinkling*.

> "By the general sentiment of Christian liberty this great change was effected," because "the practice of immersion, apostolic and primitive as it was, was peculiarly unsuitable to the tastes and convenience and feelings" of the Western public in the seventeenth century; "no one would now wish to go back to the old practice, though it had, no doubt, the sanction of the apostles and of their Master." The change from immersion to sprinkling "is a striking example of the triumph of convenience and common sense over the bondage of form and custom."

These are amazing words. Here Dean Stanley emphasizes immersion as the original form, commanded by Christ and practiced by the apostles—*emphasizes the change that took place*—and justifies the change on the ground of "convenience and common sense." A positive institution was changed essentially and rad-

ically; the law of Christ was deliberately set aside—all for "common sense and convenience!"

This brings us squarely to the question of loyalty and obedience. What is to be our guide in this matter? "General sentiment of Christian liberty?" "The tastes, the convenience, and the feelings" of a particular people in a particular country? "Common sense?" What then becomes of Christ's law? What of the New Testament as the supreme authority? Let the spirit and principle of Dean Stanley prevail, and nothing is steadfast; baptism will go entirely; the Lord's Supper will soon follow; creeds—definite forms of definite belief—will also go. If the "tastes and conveniences and feelings" of the seventeenth century may deliberately change the ordinance of baptism from immersion to sprinkling, then the "tastes and conveniences and feelings" of the twentieth century may sweep the whole thing away.

This summary and high-handed method of dealing with the ordinances has caused controversies and conflicts in the past, and will inevitably lead to them in the future. Of course such things will find resistance and bring conflict and divisions. Division, bad as it is between the followers of our Lord, is far better than the setting aside of his positive law for "common sense." There are those now as always in the past who hold, like Dr. John Hall, that "church matters cannot be settled by the popular demand, as you determine the route of a railroad." It is far better even at any cost "to go back to the old practice which had the sanction

of the apostles and their Master." Better far to retrace our steps and walk the path our Master walked and do the things he commanded and follow in the example he set for us. "Common sense" cannot propose anything which will justify disobedience to his law—otherwise "common sense" will prove traitorous and play the part of Judas afresh in betraying our only law-giver.

And we must not forget the great host of those who now hold and always have held baptism as Christ gave it, and who have not given up immersion for sprinkling. There is no need for going "back." And we must remember, too, that the learning and scholarship and piety of the world have always sanctioned what was first sanctioned by the apostles and their Master; and all the more of late are coming to assert with more vigor that immersion was the "original mode," and to recognize that "the change from immersion to sprinkling" was high-handed infringement of Christ's law, and obscures the beauty of the ordinance and destroys its wonderful meaning in its relation to the great facts and truths of the system. The change was wrong, and has wrought untold harm to truth and dishonor to Christ.

### The Supremacy of Christ's Law.

6. The law of Christ concerning these ordinances is imperative. Baptism and the supper are still binding, and require obedience at our hands. They are the same now in form and spirit and meaning as with the

early Christians. To change them, or mar them in any way, is to break the law of Christ, and has in it every essential of disloyalty. Duty seems clear. His voice of command comes to us—*teach them to observe* all things whatsoever I have commanded you; this do in remembrance of me—as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Baptism must still tell in lofty symbol of his death and burial and resurrection, also of our union with him in the risen life; the supper as the new testament in his blood must still tell in symbol of its shedding on the cross for the remission of sins and of our continued life in him. And together baptism and the supper must show to all the world our loyalty to him.

A plea for these ordinances is a plea for organic Christianity, and should appeal to all Christians of every name. We must give them due prominence, and so fulfill the law of Christ. They are still the Lord's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are our high privilege and solemn, earnest duty. Enshrine these ordinances in your hearts for conservation; let the love of the Master kindle and glow around the Master's institutions and become most ardent and unconquerable when standing for faithfulness and loyalty in the things he has commanded.

It becomes us surely to give these ordinances that high and exalted place which they held with him. It is ours to cultivate a sense of duty, to cherish above much the exalted privilege, and to get a greater and more lofty conception of these beautiful and sublime

ordinances. Herein we will honor our Master in honoring the things that are his; herein also we will walk in the path in which our Master first walked and on which the glory and blessing of his presence are resting today, and which shall give something of the fuller blessing and glory when he shall come again. These ordinances declare for his Lordship over all, and his Lordship over all is essential to his being the Saviour of men. In the Lord's baptism and the Lord's supper, as surely as in any service, we may crown him King of kings and Lord of lords.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ESSENTIAL FORM OF BAPTISM.

THE ordinance, baptism, is larger in meaning than the word, baptism. We need to discriminate between them for the sake of emphasis and clearer understanding. In speaking of baptism we should at least have in mind which is intended, the ordinance or the word.

The ordinance while signifying more than the word, yet derives both its name and its form from the word, and becomes known and recognized as *baptism*. And so the word is used for the ordinance, counted synonymous with the ordinance. This comes from the fact that the word has peculiar force, and describes even in spectacular way a definite act, which in turn becomes itself full of momentous significance. The ordinance is named *baptism* because it *baptizes;* just as John, the forerunner of our Lord, is called the Baptist because he came baptizing. In the same way the word by the very force of its meaning has given the ordinance its *form*.

Form means "a model, an example, a pattern placed before us to be held fast and copied; a pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made or done." In this sense the ordinance of baptism is a form. The meaning of the word baptism, and all that is said

throughout this volume and throughout the New Testament, requires immersion as the essential form of the ordinance. Jesus commanded the ordinance, gave us the pattern, set the example or model for its observance. And that model is immersion.

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan." (Mark 3: 9.)

"We are buried with him by baptism, wherein also we are risen with him." (Col. 2: 12.)

"Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." (Rom. 6: 17.)

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4: 5, 6.)

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 1: 13.)

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof"—this is not a word against form, but rather against having the form without the power. It commends form, and implies that it may be full of the power and beauty of godliness—as the method and general expression of godliness. Godliness is of the mind and heart, as in beliefs and experiences, while the form is outward, giving expression sometimes in words, sometimes in actions.

Inner conditions of soul are sure to find their expression in outward action, sometimes in tone of voice, sometimes in words, and sometimes in simple attitude of body. *And this is form*—the form of godliness, if it be an expression of godliness, and may be marked by simplicity and full of beauty. Godliness of the

heart shows itself in the life—whether in prayer, or song, or baptism, or giving, or worship, or loftiness of conduct, in a godly walk and conversation, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." It is a far-reaching principle and gives vital connection between the inner and outer life, between the heart-life and the world-life. This is lofty obedience—obedience from the heart—obedience in right form—obedience in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

### A Plea for Obedience.

Here we make the plea for obeying Christ's law in letter and spirit, the plea also for the ordinance of baptism in its form and purpose. The absence of right spirit or design mars and vitiates the act, while absence of right form is utterly destructive of the ordinance itself. With the right form gone, the act is no longer baptism. The form therefore is a matter of much concern to the believer who desires to do the Master's will, and to obey from the heart the Master's command, and to follow the Master's example in faith and love. The form is also of much concern to the cause of Christ; for it involves the integrity of his law, the purity of his ordinance, and the holding fast of great doctrines and even facts concerning himself. No one who loves Christ and is loyal to him can be indifferent to this pressing question. The form is not only of consequence, but is essential.

Here we come upon a serious division in the Christian world, a division of sentiment and practice among the followers of our Lord, a division concerning things which he has commanded. The division concerns baptism—concerns the form of baptism. The one part holds that the form is pouring or sprinkling; the other part claims that the form is immersion, and only immersion; both agreeing in the one Lord and largely in the one faith, but divide at the one baptism. This increases the gravity of the situation, and should constrain every one to face the issue honestly and in fear of God, and each one for himself.

Our appeal must be to the New Testament alone. It is the law of baptism, our only and imperative guide in belief and practice. The question of what is required in baptism is very simple and easy in its last analysis, and can be readily settled when the heart is once set on inquiry. What did the Master himself do in his baptism in the Jordan? What did he appoint and command in baptism? The answer to these questions points the way of loyalty and honor and service in his kingdom. And it is the only way for one who will walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, to do them.

## The Form Commanded by Name.

1. *Jesus commanded immersion when he commanded to baptize.* John had previously received *the form* for his baptism, as it were a pattern from the Holy Mount,

when God sent him to baptize. We cannot have the original baptism unless we have the original form. That form is in the act itself, is indicated in its very name, and defined by the word—*baptism*.

This word baptism comes to us from the Greek language in which the New Testament was written, and is of certain and definite meaning. It has been transferred, not translated, into English, lifted bodily out of the Greek and set down in the English. Its original meaning therefore must be retained, and can be learned only from the original word as used in the Greek.

The Greek language is rich and precise in its use of words. It has four words, for example, to describe the four different actions of pouring, sprinkling, bathing, washing the hands—each a word with its own separate and definite meaning, meaning just that and nothing else. *But neither of these words is ever used to indicate baptism.* The ordinance is never called sprinkling, but always and everywhere is called baptism, which, like the other words, has also its own separate and definite meaning. Sprinkling is never called baptism, and baptism is never called sprinkling —as red is not called blue, and blue is not called red, walking is not called running, and running is not called walking. They are different names and mean different things.

The oneness of form in baptism is emphatic and beyond question, demanded alike by common sense and Scripture. There is no such thing as "mode of bap-

tism," or "different modes of baptism," it is simply the one unvarying *form of baptism.* Which form? There is but *one form,* and there is but one baptism, just as there is one Lord and one faith and one God, the Father of all. This one unvarying form is in the name, and that name is baptism. We must know the meaning of baptism, and here is its definition. These authorities are trustworthy and impartial, and their definition is decisive in declaring the meaning of the word and the form of the ordinance.

*Robinson's Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament:* "Baptize; to immerse, to sink. Baptism; something immersed. To be baptized in the Holy Spirit; to overwhelm, richly furnish with all spiritual gifts. To be baptized with calamities; to overwhelm with sufferings. Baptized with baptism I am baptized with; can ye endure to be overwhelmed with sufferings like those which I must endure?"

*Herman Cremer's Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek:* A special study of Greek words having a religious meaning, defines baptism to be, "immerse, submerge. The peculiar New Testament and Christian use of the word; to denote immersion, submersion for a religious purpose."

*John Calvin in his Institutes says:* "The very word baptize, however, signifies to immerse."

*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Divinity School of Harvard University):* "Baptize: To dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge (of vessels sunk). To cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water. In the New Testament an immersion in water. Baptism is immersion, submersion. Christian baptism, according to the view of the apostles, is a rite of sacred immersion, commanded by Christ."

*The International Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of Mark (Gould, Episcopal):* "Baptism of repentance—into the Jordan. Rite of immersion in

water. The preposition here coincides with the proper meaning of the verb, indicating that the form of the rite was immersion into the stream."

*The same commentary on Luke (Alfred Plummer, Master of University College, Durham. Presbyterian):* "Baptize; I immerse. It is only when baptism is administered by immersion that its full significance is seen."

The word expresses the form and is one with the form—baptism the word and baptism the ordinance. Its meaning is explicit and definite, and by these authorities is immerse and immersion. Other authorities could be added to these by many pages, but there is no need. For these are sufficient, and all the others speak the same thing in defining the words baptize and baptism. Indeed, no Greek Lexicon of standard repute gives any other meaning to these words. It is always immerse and immersion, or some such kindred term like dip, or plunge, or overwhelm, either in a literal or figurative sense. And the usage of the word, which is higher authority than even the Lexicon and is the basis of the Lexicon, confirms this definition. No one has yet found a single passage either in the New Testament or other literature, in which the word baptize is used in any different sense. Never in one single instance, so far as the best scholarship has been able to determine, was the word used to mean pour or sprinkle.*

Indeed, no word in any language is easier, clearer,

* Dr. T. J. Conant has collected in a volume (*Baptizein*) every passage in Greek literature where the word baptize is used. He gives both the Greek and its English translation so the reader can test for himself the meaning of the word. In every passage the word requires for translation our English word immerse or some kindred word.

or more definite in meaning than the words baptism and baptize in the Greek language. And this is true whether they are used in a literal or figurative sense, in an ordinary or sacred sense—as when a ship was baptized in the sea, or a sword was baptized in a man's body, or a believer was buried with Christ in baptism. This word having always the one meaning makes immersion the essential form of the ordinance. And without this form there is no baptism. It is equivalent to saying *an* immersion is essential to *the* immersion. The form, baptism, cannot be separated from the ordinance baptism, except in thought and for emphasis. Ordinance expresses authority and purpose, while its name (baptism) expresses the form of its observance. In commanding baptism Christ commanded *the form,* and in commanding the ordinance he commanded its observance. Spirit and form and purpose are of him, and are alike essential and binding with us.

### The New Testament Form.

2. Immersion, the New Testament pattern, accords with the New Testament practice. There is here no change in the meaning of the word; though like many other words in the transition from profane to sacred use, this word also is charged with new and loftier thought, and expresses definite act and purpose. Here the word (baptism)—a familiar household term of everyday use for ordinary purposes among Greek-speaking people—is called into new and noble service.

It becomes the uniform (the one-form) name of the ordinance baptism, one of the two ordinances in the Christian system, and defines the one permanent form of its administration. For in the New Testament the ordinance is not called by any other word; and this word is seldom used for other purposes, but sometimes in symbol, and then its original meaning is retained, as for example the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or Christ's being overwhelmed in the flood of his sufferings.

It became a new word in a broad and exalted sense because of its new and distinguished use; but retained without change its meaning among the people, and brought that meaning into its new service as defined in the Lexicons. That meaning is at once simple, exact, strong, and uniform—always and everywhere an immersion. This one word was chosen because of the fitness of its one meaning to represent everywhere the one baptism. Thenceforward *baptism* became the one name for the New Testament ordinance and immersion the one form for the New Testament practice.

The word *baptize* was given dignity and a new rank among words when God made it the mark of John's mission and sent him to baptize; the word *baptism* became forever a badge of honor, when our Lord himself received from the preacher in the wilderness his baptism in the Jordan and then made baptism the name of the new ordinance in his kingdom; the word *baptizing* came into a new place of distinction when our Lord made it express the commission and command for the disciples until he shall come again, "baptizing

into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

This is the sense, and the only sense, in which the word became a new word—new in its use, but not different in meaning. The new use put into the old meaning larger, richer, more definite significance. Christ had touched this one word, and forthwith it lived a new life. It was the one mould in which God cast the ordinance, and the one form upon which our Lord set the seal of his authority. The ordinance cannot part from its name, baptism, and the name, baptism, cannot part from its meaning, immersion, but is now the immersion which God has commanded for a single, definite, exalted purpose.

This is the form placed before us to be held fast and copied; the model in conformity to which baptism must be administered; the example for our imitation; the pattern always followed by the apostles; a form of wondrous beauty and charm if only there be present the power of godliness in spirit and purpose. This is a rite, but no "mere rite;" a form, but not a "mere form;" a ceremony indeed, but of solemn and sublime import; an external in religion, but the expression of an inner meaning and beauty and power that may well attract the attention of the angels themselves.

### Immersion the Form Used.

This New Testament form has a fine illustration in the account of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. They

came together under the Spirit's direction; and it was a supreme hour when the high official met the man of God, and heard from him the gracious message of salvation. With preacher and sinner and Holy Spirit in conjunction, something must come to pass—the preaching, the opening of the heart, the believing, the being saved, the stopping in the journey for obedience in the Lord's appointed rite.

> "As they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
>
> "And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8: 36-39.)

Here we have in detail a fine type of New Testament baptism—a believer for its subject, immersion for its form, a public declaration of faith in his newly accepted Lord as its design, and as result a rapturous joy of the heart in the sense of obedience. The Holy Spirit was present as he was present at the Jordan when the Saviour was immersed, just as really though not in visible manifestation. It was a wonderful exhibition of what baptism must be in subject, form, purpose, and spirit if conforming to the New Testament pattern and practice. The word (baptize) itself tells what was done when preacher and believer had gone

down into the water and he baptized him. This is the one word that everywhere marks and names the act. It always denotes the form of immersion; and those who receive baptism are said to be baptized—immersed after the example set for imitation and after the pattern which is before us to be copied.

### One Word for All Cases.

This word defines the baptism of the three thousand who gladly received the word on the day of Pentecost; it defines the baptism of Cornelius and those who believed with him; it defines the baptism of the eunuch and of Saul of Tarsus, of Lydia and the jailer with their believing households. Likewise in emblem and beautiful symbolic power it describes what is done when the believer is buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also he is risen with him; or when buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so he also should walk in newness of life. It is the same word that tells what God sent John to do, what John did when he baptized in the river, what Jesus received when baptized in the Jordan, what he commanded his disciples to do, and what he commands us to do.

And the very meaning of the word as shown from the Lexicons makes it certain and positive that in each and every case of New Testament baptism it was an immersion; and throughout there was uniform action

and conformity to the pattern. And wherever in the New Testament the words baptize and baptism occur, you may substitute immerse or immersion, and the change will do no violence to the sense, and in many cases will make the meaning plainer and stronger. This cannot be done with the words pouring or sprinkling, or with any other word except one of kindred meaning to immersion. This is a simple yet severe test which any one can try for himself in any passage he may choose.

Pouring or sprinkling tells what is done with the water, immerse and immersion tell what is done with the person; you sprinkle water, you pour water, but you do not immerse water; you immerse or baptize the person. John did not sprinkle the people in the river, he immersed or baptized them in the river; Christ was not sprinkled in the Jordan, but he also was immersed or baptized in the water. It is not said that the believer is *buried* with Christ by sprinkling, or *risen* with him again by sprinkling; but in his immersion he is buried, and in his emersion he is raised up again. Neither sprinkling nor pouring has any symbol for either burial or resurrection. The Holy Spirit was not baptized (immersed), but to show the copiousness of his coming he was said to be "poured out," and then the disciples were baptized, immersed in him, in his influence which filled the chamber where they were assembled, overwhelmed in the fullness of his presence and power.*

* See page 128, concerning Baptism or the Spirit.

So immersion as the form of the ordinance is the one pattern throughout the New Testament. It accords with all the teaching and all the practice. It is the one form whose meaning answers every requirement. Christ followed this pattern which John had received, and was himself immersed; his own baptism in the Jordan, crowned by the glory of the Spirit's presence and the approving word from the Father, set this pattern for all others and is for universal imitation. The disciples followed the example of their Master, and copied the pattern which he himself had given and which he commanded for all succeeding years.

### The Change from Baptism to Sprinkling.

3. Men have changed the form which Christ commanded. Sprinkling has been put in the place of immersion. This change from the New Testament pattern and practice is manifest, and has done serious violence to the cause of truth. Sprinkling as a religious ceremony had many noble purposes in the symbolism of the Bible, but not as baptism. It passed away with Judaism. There is not a trace of it in the New Testament, and nothing like it in the Christian system. New Testament baptism has its one form as indicated by its name, but is never called sprinkling; and sprinkling is never called baptism. The two words in the original language are essentially and radically different in meaning and use—as much so indeed as the two English words sprinkling and immersion. And the original

word for sprinkling is never applied to baptism either by the disciples or by Christ himself.

Indeed, Christ never used the word sprinkle for any purpose. He commanded baptism, *and did not command sprinkling*. The two words cannot take the place of each other; they stand ever apart, each in its own sphere, having its own meaning and service. Sprinkling cannot be a "mode of baptism" as it cannot be a mode of immersion. Such a use of the word, and the use of such form in the ceremony, was a violent departure from the New Testament pattern and practice. It was a change from baptism to sprinkling. It required centuries for this change to be made, and yet other centuries for it to get a permanent place. And since then sprinkling for baptism has brought serious and grievous divisions among the followers of Christ.

This change to sprinkling can be traced to its origin; and its cause and course in history are easily marked. In the early centuries there were frequent perversion and corruption of Christian doctrine. The first change concerning baptism was in its *design* with its form remaining immersion; and instead of the beautiful symbolic import of the ordinance, persons were baptized with the idea that baptism in some magical way procured salvation and effected the new birth in the heart. Thus came the doctrine of "baptismal regeneration"—preserving immersion as the form but changing the design of the ordinance, and so brought on one of the most fruitful and fearful breeders of evil the world has ever known.

And then later, say after the middle of the third century, the form also was changed, first from immersion to pouring (a profuse pouring in imitation of immersion), and then much later from pouring to sprinkling for baptism. The object of the change was to have an easy "mode of baptism" for emergency cases in extreme sickness, that none should die and be lost for lack of baptism. This opened a flood gate for evil in doctrine and practice; and so by slow and grievous stages pouring and sprinkling worked their course down the centuries. Finally the practice of sprinkling along with "infant baptism," which meanwhile had also been introduced as a means of "infant salvation," became absolute in "The Church of Rome," which, in the exercise of its idea of Church authority, changed the ordinance from immersion to pouring and from pouring to sprinkling. And then many centuries later still, this new "mode of baptizing" became prevalent with all those people who had more or less historical connection with Roman Catholicism.

And so sprinkling remains to this day. Even the great Luther, though coming out of Rome with a mighty wrench that shook all Europe, did not leave behind him either Rome's "infant baptism" or Rome's sprinkling for baptism. So with others who came out of her in the hope of making things better. Sprinkling for baptism, instead of the original form, remains because Roman Catholicism fastened it on the world as a means of salvation. It tells its own history and bears always the mark of its origin.

## Historical Statement and Contrast.

In the preceding chapter a quotation is made from the article on Baptism, written by Dean Stanley and published some thirty years ago in the latter part of his life. His words were introduced there to show a reckless method in setting aside the law of Christ. They are repeated here to confirm the statement concerning the change of the form of the ordinance from immersion to sprinkling. He was himself an Episcopalian of the Church of England, and wrote as a historian emphasizing the fact of the change and its cause.

> In his account he says: Immersion was the original form—the form observed and commanded by Christ, the form enjoined and practiced by the apostles. But he continues, "There came a change in the form itself"—a change from immersion to sprinkling. "By the general sentiment of Christian liberty this great change was effected," because "the practice of immersion, apostolic and primitive as it was, was peculiarly unsuitable to the tastes and conveniences and feelings" of the Western public in the seventeenth century; "no one would now wish to go back to the old practice, though it had, no doubt, the sanction of the apostles and of their Master." The change from immersion to sprinkling "is a striking example of the triumph of common sense and convenience over the bondage of form and custom."

By the Western public he means the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in contrast with the Greek Church in the East which has always adhered to the original pattern, immersing even in case of "infant baptism" and practicing trine immersion. The change was earlier than the seventeenth century, and its cause lay further back than the taste and convenience of

any one people. To make a change on that ground would be bad enough, yet its true cause is infinitely worse. And according to the printed creeds and confessions of faith this idea of baptismal salvation has adhered to the practice of sprinkling more or less through all these years.

*Haydock's Catholic Family Bible and Commentary says:* Romans 6: 3, 4. "The apostle here alludes to the manner of administering the sacrament of baptism, which was then done by immersion or by plunging the person baptized under the water, in which he finds a resemblance of Christ's death and burial under ground, and of his resurrection to an immortal life."

Matthew 3: 6. "*Baptized.* The word baptism signifies a *washing,* particularly when it is done by *immersion,* or by *dipping,* or *plunging* a thing under water, which was formerly the ordinary way of administering the sacrament of baptism.

"But the Church, which cannot change the least article of the Christian faith, is not so tied up in matters of discipline and ceremonies. Not only the Catholic Church, but also the pretended reformed churches, have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water on the person baptized; nay, many of their ministers do it nowadays by *fillipping* a wet finger and thumb over the child's head, or by shaking a wet finger or two over the child, which it is hard enough to call a baptizing in any sense."

This Commentary is standard among Catholics, and has the endorsement by personal letters from Pope Pius IX. and by a large number of Cardinals and Archbishops. The Catholics are bold in asserting their right to change the ordinance, and manifestly are jealous of having others practice what they themselves claim as their own.

That the ordinance was changed from baptism to sprinkling, and was changed by Roman Catholics on their pretended right of church authority, is a common matter of history. And in making the change they contravened the command of Christ and destroyed the meaning of the ordinance so far as they or their followers are concerned. And sprinkling for baptism as we have it today is manifestly of the Romish Church in origin and purpose. It is a contribution which Rome has made to the world of its corrupted form of the ordinance. Shall we follow Christ, or shall we follow Rome? Shall we take the sprinkling which the Roman Catholics have given to the world, or shall we be true to Christ in his commandments and to the New Testament in its pattern and practice?

### Design Dependent upon Right Form.

4. We here pass from the meaning of the word to the meaning of the ordinance—from its name to its design—from the form of baptism to the symbolic import of baptism. As an ordinance of the Gospel baptism is a composite act, being a personal obedience to the command of our Lord, having a definite form and also a definite design which cannot be expressed apart from that form. The form is so essential to the meaning of the ordinance that a change of form takes away its sense and significance—its sign-making power. The meaning of the ordinance (baptism) like the meaning of the word (baptism) *requires* the form of

immersion in its administration. And if the form of immersion be gone, then baptism itself with its symbolic import is destroyed and you have no baptism, even though the spirit and intention be retained in other sort of religious ceremony.

The ordinance is composite, and must be held in its unity and integrity as to form and subject and design and spirit. A misunderstanding of the design brought the change from immersion to sprinkling, but the original design requires the original form. Baptism does not effect the new birth; is not "in order to the remission of sins;" is not "a condition of pardon," nor in any sense "a means of salvation." Its design and meaning are in its figure of being buried and rising again. Sprinkling has no such power of figure—no such significance or sign-making power. In no sense can it represent a burial or resurrection.

"Sprinkling as a form of baptism" (1) is not like the baptism of Jesus, (2) does not commemorate in picture his burial and resurrection, (3) cannot show in emblem the believer's union with his Lord in those mighty events of tragedy and triumph; (4) nor does sprinkling show the believer's being dead to sin and buried, nor his risen life with Christ, (5) nor can sprinkling foretoken in form the final resurrection. Nothing but immersion can fill this high office or give this exceptional service. Design or purpose is more important than form, and yet is inseparable from its form.

Dr. William Sanday, an Episcopalian of the Church of England, counted by some as the foremost scholar of the day, in commenting on Romans 6: 4, says of baptism: "It expresses symbolically a series of acts corresponding to the redeeming acts of Christ:

"Immersion = Death;
Submersion = Burial (the ratification of Death);
Emergence = Resurrection."

And Dr. Plummer, Presbyterian, already quoted, says: "It is only when baptism is administered by immersion that its full significance is seen."

This is the view taken by the ablest expositors in all the years, and the view also which commends itself to the average reader of the word of God. Throughout these pages form and subject and spirit and purpose have been held inseparable, as essential to the completeness of the ordinance and as showing its wonderful beauty and moral grandeur.

The form of a thing is often essential to the thing—is sometimes the thing itself. The silver dollar must have the form of a silver dollar; the paper dollar must have the form of the paper dollar; and in each case must be stamped with the national stamp as giving it meaning and authority to serve in the money market. The wedding ring must have its form. Not every circle is a wedding ring, and yet you cannot have the wedding ring without the circle; and this, too, must be stamped with a something that gives it authority. Not every immersion is baptism, and yet you cannot have baptism without immersion. You may break or mar the form, but so far you have broken or marred or

lost the ordinance in all its glorious import as Christ gave it to us.

What is it that makes the national ensign, except certain things set in certain form? There are so many colors and a given material. But these do not make a flag—they must be put into form, definite, specific form. Color is color whether in the shop or on canvas, whether in the flower or the rainbow. But make the combination into *form* with red and white stripes alternating, with stars on the blue field, and then you have the national flag. It is form that makes the stars and stripes, and into that form go the nation's life and authority and honor. Baptism is the ensign in the kingdom of God, the emblem of what grace has done and will yet do. But its very emblematic power is in its form; its power of utterance is in its form; its very self is in its form—form that expresses wonderful meaning and has in it the authority of high heaven.

Baptism as immersion with its corresponding emersion alone fits the pattern our Lord gave us at the Jordan; immersion alone can serve in figure as a monument of the burial and resurrection of Jesus; immersion alone can give the answer of a good conscience toward God, showing in figure the resurrection of Christ by which we are saved; only immersion as baptism sets out in emblem our union with Christ in his redemptive work; only this baptism tells of our death to sin, of our new risen life, and of our hope for the final triumph over death. Immersion is full of death,

but emersion is full of life and promise and hope and joy.

No other form of baptism can tell these wonderful things; and with this form removed the ordinance is without meaning. Indeed, those who practice sprinkling are accustomed to speak of baptism as a "mere rite;" a "mere form," or a "mere ceremony." And so it is to them; and no wonder they think so, since they have abandoned the form in which the ordinance holds its symbolic sense and beauty and crowning glory.

### Individual Obligation in Baptism.

5. Keeping the ordinance requires obedience to its form. The ordinance is given in trust to the churches —to each separate local body of believers. This is church obligation and church responsibility. But in addition, there is individual obligation in baptism with every one who names the name of Christ. It is an obligation first for his own personal baptism, and second for faithful guardianship in preserving the pattern and practice commanded by our Lord. When the believer himself has been buried with Christ in baptism he has yet other high and pressing obligations concerning the ordinance. And every obligation to the ordinance is an obligation also to its form. One cannot have baptism (immersion as a great emblem and figure) unless he be baptized (immersed) as his Lord commanded. Obedience requires both letter and spirit, both form and purpose. And throughout the Bible, in both the

Old Testament and the New, God puts great stress on the importance of keeping his commandments.

> "And Saul said: I have performed the commandments of the Lord.
> "And Samuel said: What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?
> "And Saul said: The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.
> "And Samuel said: Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offering and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Samuel 15: 13-22.)

This is a great principle and applies to baptism as to any other of the Lord's commandments. Surely he has no pleasure in your shifting responsibility, or in your substituting one thing for another, or in your setting aside his commandments, or in your serving God in one form when his commandment names another. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"—everywhere, and concerning all his commandments. Individual obligation in baptism is very urgent; and is *made more urgent* by the divided judgment and practice among the followers of our Lord—the one part for immersion and the other part for sprinkling.

As to the great denominations who practice sprinkling, all of them admit immersion as a form of baptism; all of them more or less will immerse the believer upon his request; some of them are placing the baptistery in their churches for immersion; all of them will receive into their membership persons who have been im-

mersed—the form of immersion passing everywhere like gold coin in the markets of the world. This is a great concession in favor of immersion. But meanwhile, what becomes of the *one baptism* which Christ commanded, and the unity of form and spirit and purpose which must be maintained? This division only serves to emphasize the question with the individual believer, and he cannot delegate its settlement to another. He is responsible for his own obedience in baptism.

Scholarship, in its several ways of expressing itself, testifies (1) that the word (baptize) means immerse, (2) that Christ was immersed, (3) that the apostles and early disciples practiced immersion, (4) that immersion was almost the universal practice for thirteen hundred years, (5) that the form was changed from immersion first to pouring, then to sprinkling, (6) that immersion alone agrees with New Testament pattern and practice and is necessary to the figure of burial and rising again to new life.

## Indifferent But Responsible.

All this as the result of the most recent scholarship is in easy reach of any one wishing to inquire for himself. And what is better and even more important, the individual believer has his own New Testament and can read and easily understand for himself. The responsibility is with him, and he must answer for his

own baptism and for the right keeping of the ordinance. A few cases for illustration:

I remember a worthy Presbyterian man who listened earnestly to a sermon urging baptism as immersion, and then remarked: "Why, I believe all that, every word of it, but it makes no difference; one way is as good as another."

I remember a young minister of excellent spirit and standing among his people, when asked some question about baptism, answered: "O well, I have given no thought to the subject, and really it makes no difference; I am Presbyterian because my father was, and I was sprinkled in infancy."

Only recently I heard a young woman of intelligence and excellent spirit say: "I am a Methodist, and was sprinkled when an infant, so they tell me, but I do not believe in sprinkling, and especially do not believe in sprinkling infants." By her own decision she had not been baptized, and was willing to remain as she was.

Two excellent and highly cultured women, one a Presbyterian and the other an Episcopalian, heard as a sermon the second chapter in this volume, and were enthusiastic in commending its spirit, and gave their unqualified endorsement to baptism as there presented. They were "certain" in their judgment that Jesus was immersed and that baptism meant burial with him and a resurrection with him. And yet they both had been sprinkled in infancy, knowing nothing of their own baptism, and by their own judgment had never followed Christ in baptism. It never occurred to them that it was a question of individual responsibility.

These are typical cases. It is no uncommon thing to find persons who insist on immersion for themselves as the thing Christ did and commanded, and as the answer of a good conscience toward God, and then remain in fellowship with those who sprinkle for baptism, and "baptize infants." And there are still others, who have themselves been immersed and do not be-

lieve in either sprinkling or "infant baptism," but are willing to go into membership, and to give their support and influence in behalf of the very things they have discarded. This does not seem a healthy condition of belief and conviction, is not loyal to the commandments of our Lord—the persons themselves being judge as to what those commandments are. If a man believes Christ commanded sprinkling, he should not by any means support baptism; if he believes Christ commanded baptism, then he should not support sprinkling. In making comparison of his baptism in order to decide his duty the believer can have only one standard—namely, the New Testament pattern and practice. He cannot afford to be indifferent about a matter which involves so much.

When a person comes, as every thoughtful believer must come, to the place where the ways part, one leading to immersion, the other to sprinkling, what is his individual duty? If he believes in one, he cannot follow the other and lend his influence and support to what he does not believe. Such a course would make him false in this high and sacred service. He *must decide;* and must decide for Christ and truth, and with true and courageous conviction.

### The Place of Divergence.

At this point Christ meets him, leads off in the way of immersion, saying, "Follow me;" at this point of divergence the apostles meet him, and, setting him

toward immersion, say, "This is the way we have gone;" here also the very meaning of the ordinance, like a sign-board with index finger, points to immersion, saying: "Herein the believer is buried with Christ, and herein also he is risen with him." Happy the believer, who heeding this threefold call of duty sets his face along the way they indicate, and follows on until coming to immersion, he says out of a joyous heart, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" That is the question of an earnest, loyal heart. What an honor to follow where our Lord has led, and to obey in the ordinance he has committed to us! Baptism is the believer's right. Here he stands where his Master stood. The pattern of the Jordan is before him, the glory of the Master's presence is upon him.

O! my reader, it will be a commanding moment in your life, separating the old and the new; will put you in alignment with the ages, and with Christ who went before the ages; and will give you an outlook of inspiration and splendor, when you are baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit—buried with Christ in baptism, wherein also you are raised up with him to walk in newness of life. The words spoken at the Jordan are still words of power: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." And where he leads the way it is imperative on us to follow. No man should stand between us and our baptism. We must go as our Lord went.

## AT THE POOL FOR BAPTISM.

"Thou hast said, exalted Jesus,
'Take thy cross and follow me;'
Shall the word with terror seize us?
Shall we from the burden flee?
Lord, I'll take it,
Lord, I'll take it,
And rejoicing follow Thee.

"While this liquid tomb surveying,
Emblem of my Saviour's grave,
Shall I shun its brink, betraying
Feelings worthy of a slave?
No, I'll enter:
No, I'll enter:
Jesus entered Jordan's wave.

"Blest the sign which thus reminds me,
Saviour, of Thy love for me;
But more blest the love that binds me
In its deathless bonds to Thee:
Oh, what pleasure,
Oh, what pleasure,
Buried with my Lord to be!

"Should it rend some fond connection,
Should I suffer shame or loss,
Yet the fragrant, blest reflection,
I have been where Jesus was,
Will revive me,
Will revive me,
When I faint beneath the cross.

"Fellowship with Him possessing,
Let me die to earth and sin;
Let me rise t' enjoy the blessing
Which the faithful soul shall win:
May I ever,
May I ever,
Follow where my Lord has been."

# CHAPTER XIII.

## FORETOKEN OF FINAL RESURRECTION.

"We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6: 4, 5.)

"But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 6: 8, 9, 11.)

"Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 21.)

CHRIST'S baptism—our baptism; his death and burial—our death and burial; his resurrection from the grave—our resurrection from the grave; his resurrection-life, freed from the dominion of death—our resurrection-life, freed from the dominion of death and sin and with him at the right hand of the Majesty on high. This combination of words, and thoughts, and events, and future prospects, comprehends the whole scheme of grace, from the beginning of the public life of our Lord, until its completeness in the redemption of our body and the coronation of the saved in the presence of the King.

Christ's baptism in the Jordan, full of august splendor as it was, had yet a fearful looking for of overwhelming sufferings in death and burial, but also had the promise of resurrection and of triumph over death. There was manifest connection between the baptism in the Jordan and the baptism that came at the last, both as events and experiences with our Lord. With that first baptism still fresh in memory, and with his heart set to finish his great mission, he said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished," indicating what he must undergo at Jerusalem when defeat and death and burial should be followed by deliverance and triumph in his resurrection. So that his baptism, foreshadowing the depths of his humiliation, had in it nevertheless the promise of a crown.

His baptism went before our baptism; his resurrection went before our resurrection. And his baptism in the Jordan was the pattern and counterpart of our baptism; his resurrection from the grave on that third morning was the pattern and promise and pledge and potency of our resurrection on that great morning when the dead shall hear his voice and come forth.

Baptized in the likeness of his baptism in the Jordan and as shown in our baptism, we are also united with him in the likeness of his death and shall be in the likeness of his resurrection. So our baptism, representing in symbol our new life risen in him, is also a foretoken of the final resurrection. What means this opening of the water, grave-like, as the believer is laid

beneath the yielding waves to be covered from sight? What means this thrusting apart again of the water, and the raising of the believer? One is burial, the other is resurrection. How beautiful and glorious this act becomes in its meaning and significance! And wherever baptism is administered there you have a bold declaration of faith in the promise and power of Jesus, in what he has said concerning that last day. Almost the simplest ordinance in all the world becomes tremendous in its symbolic import, and shines in the honor and glory of that coming event when the dead shall live again—when the work of death shall be undone, and death itself shall die, and there shall be no more death. Baptism foretells the coming triumph, and we rejoice in the song which it sings in the face of present defeat.

### The Engagement Ring.

Coming events cast their shadows before. Engagement ring and marriage ring—one is pledge and foretoken, the other is consummation. The Church is the bride, and the marriage supper of the Lamb is one of the great dates set for the future. Then the bridegroom will come to claim his own, to fulfill his promise and redeem his pledge.

The resurrection in fact as the consummation is the wedding ring; but meanwhile the Church as the future bride, the Lamb's wife, has the engagement ring—baptism, the resurrection in figure. She wears it as part of her adornment, and holds it sacred as a gift

from the bridegroom, pledge of his return and foretoken of the glorious occasion yet to be. What a beautiful jewel it is—this baptism, this resurrection in figure, patterned after the one he wore himself, and foretoken of the sublimest moment in the destiny of man! It is a matter of momentous concern that the bridegroom, when he comes, shall find the ring unbroken, unmarred, untarnished, and worn by a bride worthy of the Lord and adorned for his coming.

The symbol is confirmed by the spoken promise. The prophecy in water is made more sure by the prophecy of the living word.

> "Behold, I tell you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.)
>
> "Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5: 28, 29.)
>
> "Then we that are alive, and remain, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4: 17.)
>
> "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15: 57).

These Scriptures stand us face to face with the resurrection of the dead. They speak with authority, and in no uncertain sound. You can contemplate the resurrection either as a doctrine in the Christian system or as the most stupendous event yet future in the history of the world. It is one of the wonder scenes in the

closing times—the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment day with the great white throne and its universal judgment, the final assignment of the saved and the lost, each to his place and portion and inheritance.

These are matters of faith, believed and foreseen as things certain to be. The resurrection, whether as a glorious doctrine or as an event yet to occur, is submitted to our faith. It is not contrary to reason, if reason be rightly informed and sufficiently supported. Not to believe the word of God concerning these tremendous issues, leaves the mind an utter blank as to the future, and leaves the future itself in unutterable darkness regarding the destiny of man. If there is no future life, man will never know it. For if he dies as the beast dies, he will of course have no consciousness, no life, no knowledge beyond the death chamber and the death hour. On the other hand, faith, laying hold on things yet far off and well supported by things now present, has a glorious future, filling the present life with hope and joy and untold comfort.

## The Sure Foundation.

History even is often incredible until facts become known and compel belief. But prophecy is more difficult of belief; because its events are yet future and unknown. Belief in prophecy has its sure foundation in our belief in God, and in our confidence in his promise and power and faithfulness and veracity.

When Marconi announced that he had succeeded in sending a message without wire, the world laughed outright, and would not believe it possible, although with him it had become a matter of history. Now the wireless message is becoming the ordinary thing, and is seen to be easy enough, and even a necessary result, if only the forces of nature are brought into certain conditions and proper relations to each other. Nearly every other great discovery and invention has had something of the same experience. Things that seem utterly impossible, all at once become easy, and as the sphere of our knowledge enlarges are seen as the necessary working of great laws and forces which God has stored away in the physical domain.

Nature is full of wonders that serve as fine illustrations of what God is doing in the kingdom of his grace. The solar spectrum illustrates the incarnation —the one revealing the nature and beauty of the sunlight, the other revealing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; the marvelous transmission of light illustrates the shedding abroad in our hearts the love of God by the Holy Spirit; the telegraph, telephone, and wireless message as so many methods of communication at long distance, and regardless of intervening obstacles, illustrate the marvels of prayer as the communication of the human soul with God by means as yet not understood by us; the resurrection of the body has ample and instructive illustration in the reproductive power of nature—that marvelous, inscrutable power of the seed to come back again after its death

and decay in the earth, to come back again in its old self, made over again in fresh beauty, but preserving what we may call its personality and identity—rye returning as rye, wheat as wheat, the flower as still the flower fresh and fragrant in its new life. "God," working in nature as in grace, "giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body."

Wonders in nature should prepare us for wonders in the Bible, and should make it easy to believe—at least easier to accept the revelations which God has made in his Word, not credulously, but in simple, child-like faith, because God is at work everywhere, and is everywhere the same. God has spoken, and his word standeth sure.

## Immortality and Resurrection.

Immortality and resurrection—these are different terms and stand for different things. The one relates to man's spirit, the other to his body. Immortality of mind—future existence of soul beyond death, is fundamental and is of almost universal belief. The nations of antiquity, even the Greeks and Romans, knew nothing of the resurrection of the body. Indeed, when brought to their attention it awakened not only unbelief, but ridicule and contempt. And yet their earnest and joyous belief in a future life is everywhere manifest in their history and philosophy and painting and sculpture. There is a wide and fundamental difference between resurrection and immortality, and yet it is

largely a difference in sweep of thought and completeness of destiny.

Christ brought *life* and immortality to light in the Gospel—everlasting life. Immortality is inherent, is of man's nature. He is born not to die—or if he die, to live again in another and larger life. As man has mind by nature and education by acquirement, so man has immortality by birth and shall live again whether he will or no; but he obtains everlasting life through faith in Jesus Christ. He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting—a product that comes as a harvest, from his believing in Christ and through the working of the Holy Spirit in his heart. The unbeliever has immortality and shall live again, but the believer has everlasting life and has his home with God at his right hand for evermore. "The dust returneth to the earth as it was, but the spirit returneth unto God who gave it."

But that is not the end of the body. It has a destiny beyond burial and the grave, and in spite of death and decay. That destiny is written large, and written in one solitary word, resurrection—a word not found outside the Bible except in literature which the Bible has created in doctrine and spirit. In support of this tremendous doctrine we are dependent wholly upon the word of God. There is no other voice but this, and if the Scriptures fail us, there is no hope beyond the grave. But they do not fail us; they speak with clearness and certainty and positive assurance, concerning the dead who have gone down to their graves. The

Bible deals with man in his completeness and crowns the whole man, soul and body, with honor and glory. And the redeeming work of Christ, by his own means and methods and promises, brings complete "adoption, to wit: the *redemption of our body.*" (Rom. 8: 23.) Will the wicked and the righteous share alike in that mighty moment when the trumpet of God shall sound?

## The Resurrection of the Ungodly.

The fact of a universal resurrection of the dead is stated broadly in both Testaments, with greater clearness and force, however, in the New. In each there is reference to the resurrection of the wicked—enough surely to make it certain and terrible. They shall come forth "to shame and everlasting contempt," says the prophet Daniel (12: 2). Paul speaks of "the resurrection of the just and of the unjust." And our Lord himself says they that have done evil shall come forth from their graves "unto the resurrection of judgment."

I leave this awful aspect of the subject where the Bible leaves it—not desiring to say more and fearing to say less. The destiny of the ungodly, whether of soul or body, is unspeakably terrible as seen in the word of God.

Sowing the seed of a lingering pain,
Sowing the seed of a maddening brain,
Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
Sowing the seed of eternal shame.
Oh, what shall the harvest be?

But the present purpose leads us to consider exclusively the resurrection of the saints—those who have believed in Christ as their Saviour, who have fallen asleep in him, who have died in the Lord. Concerning these and their resurrection the words of Scripture are as a sheen of glory on the sacred pages of inspiration.

"But how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" This is a heart question, and is legitimate. Only it must not be asked in the spirit of the man whom Paul rebuked as a fool; nor in the spirit and purpose of those Sadducees who came to Jesus and thought to entrap him.

They thought their case not only a real difficulty, but an unanswerable objection to the whole question of a future life. It was the case of a woman who had been seven times married and who would be confronted in the future life with seven legal husbands.

Christ rebuked them, and in his answer laid down a far-reaching principle which answers all difficulties and all objections to the resurrection of the dead: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God." The objection, formidable as it seemed, was based upon their misconception of the whole matter. They committed two blunders, erred in two directions; in not understanding the Scriptures and in not recognizing God's power to raise the dead in whatsoever manner he may elect. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us that God should raise the dead, or that then God should give a body as it hath pleased

him, and to every one his own body—as occurs under our eyes in nature almost every day?

## The Present and Future Body.

The resurrection body, says Origen, shall be "this body indeed, but not such as it was."

Van Oosterzee: "The restored body must in its very essence, in the deepest kernel of its being, be even the same as this present; it is at the same time furnished with wholly different properties."

The present body becomes the future body, the new body issuing from the old under the purpose and promise and power of God. And everywhere throughout the Scriptures, directly and indirectly, this present body is counted the subject upon which the mighty power operates and in which the glorious change takes place.

The expressions, "from the dead" and "from the tomb," likewise the words, resurrection, to rise, raising, was raised, is risen, as also their Greek equivalents, cannot possibly refer in this connection to anything but the present body. These words were used first as the promise and then as the description of what occurred with Lazarus and with Christ when they were raised from the dead. And they are also used to tell what shall come to pass when the dead are raised up. They apply to the body—tell what shall be done with the body. Its destiny is death and burial and resurrection. From the body that now is will come forth the body that shall be.

Sleep is a frequent figure of death. But it describes

the effect of death in the body. Its main feature is unconsciousness, but there is no unconsciousness of soul or spirit. In death the body sleeps, the body becomes unconscious, and in the resurrection the body is awakened and raised up.

Some teach that the resurrection body itself is entirely new, ethereal in nature, created of God with no reference to the old body, and prepared for the soul's habitation immediately upon its entrance into the spirit world. But such a body can in no sense be a *resurrection* body, and the idea is contrary to the word of God that everywhere contemplates the present body as the resurrection subject. Those who are alive and remain when Christ comes, shall experience a change unsurpassed by what takes place in raising the dead. But that change will take place in their bodies. The living will not be caught up unchanged, nor simply in their spirits disembodied while their bodies lie as carcasses on the earth. The dead and living have equal advantage in the future body and conditions. The dead are raised—theirs is a resurrection; the living are changed—theirs is a transfiguration and translation. With both living and dead, as with Enoch who walked with God and was not, for God took him, and with Elijah who was carried into heaven in a chariot of fire without tasting death, and with Christ who after death on the cross was buried and then raised from the tomb by the power of God—*the body will be the subject of the change,* and will become the new body, passing into the glorified condition and the glorified estate.

THE STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURE.

"We that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep." (1 Thess. 4: 15.)

"We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed. . . . . The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15: 51-53.)

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15: 42-44.)

"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "Shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (1 Cor. 15: 49; 1 John 3: 2; Phil. 3: 21.)

"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8: 23.)

"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15: 54.)

The present body is manifestly the subject of all this wonderful change, and in its new condition will be the resurrection body. The model after which it is fashioned is the glorified body of our risen Lord. We bear now the image of the earthy, we shall then bear the image of the heavenly—now like Adam, then like Christ, with the spiritual body fashioned like unto the body of his glory. This mortal body is buried; and this mortal body is touched by the resurrection power, is given life, is raised up from the dead, comes from

the tomb, is clothed with immortality. The language of Scripture cannot be misunderstood, and tells in a wonderful way what that new body shall be.

The doctrine of a bodily resurrection must be accepted or the whole Scripture must be reconstructed and rewritten. It speaks more plainly on no subject. He who raised up Jesus from the dead, will raise us up also by Jesus. Our present bodies, whether we live or die, shall undergo a complete change. In some way, unrevealed as yet, the body of our humiliation shall be formed anew. And by this metamorphosis there shall come forth out of the old body, and in its stead, a new body, which standing in the glory of that new morning shall be the resurrection body of the saint.

When we think, therefore, of the resurrection as pertaining to these bodies, and of their rising from the graves in which they were buried and saw corruption, we must think also of the marvelous change to be wrought upon them and in them. They are the same, yet fundamentally and essentially new, made to conform unto the glorified body of Christ.

We are greatly in the dark as to the nature of this new body—as to its form and essence and properties. Yet by the word of God we know some of its characteristics. If we knew more of the glorified body of Christ, we could determine more concerning those who are his and who will be like him. We know that he rose from the dead—was seen, and handled, and recognized on the earth—was seen to ascend into heaven—was seen by Saul of Tarsus in a splendor above the

brightness of the midday sun—was seen by Stephen standing at the right hand of God—was seen also by John walking among the golden candlesticks in a vision of awful and overpowering splendor, and yet the same person who walked the hills of Galilee and that *was* dead, but alive now and for evermore. We know, moreover, that we shall be like him, and that the new body shall be incorruptible and immortal—a spiritual body and ineffably glorious—that in all this marvelous change there shall be no loss of identity—that remaining yet ourselves we shall be made fit to sit with him at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is the bright and morning star, and his resurrection was the dawn of that glorious resurrection day. And in that glad morning Jesus will still be Jesus, John will be John, Martha will be Martha, Mary will be Mary, you will be you—each in his own glad, joyous self made like unto the Son of God. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

## The Resurrection Power.

With ample power operating under promise and purpose, even these things are not only possible, but easy and inevitable.

"This is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day. No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me

draw him; and I will raise him up in the last day." (John 6: 40-44.)

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4: 16. 17.)

"Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 21.)

Jesus has set the time of the resurrection. It is not yet; it is still future, and is set for *"the last day."* Jesus will raise the believer from the dead, but not until the "last day." This is important as showing that whatever is done for the spirit at the time of death cannot be therefore the resurrection of the body. It is stated frequently and with great emphasis that the time is coming and at "the last day;" and in "that day" the mighty work will be done.

Christ himself is the resurrection power and guarantee: "I am the resurrection and the life," "I will raise him up." These are mighty words, and are stamped with authority. The great question resolves itself back into a question of his power and his veracity. He himself will descend with a shout, and the dead in him shall rise, "according to the working whereby he is able to subject all things unto himself." We know not how this will be, but verily there is ample scope and ample power.

When you have seen the seed which you have planted coming back to you again in the beautiful

flower in the garden, why wonder that God has promised and put his everlasting power into his promise to raise the dead, each one in a body distinctively his own, and yet infinitely glorious. It is planted in corruption and shall be raised in incorruption and power and honor and glory; planted in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of his resurrection.

Some years ago there was in East River at New York an immense reef partially hidden beneath the water and doing such fearful wreckage to ships as to get for itself the name of Hell-Gate. In answer to the demand of commerce its removal was undertaken. It was compassed about in part with a great cofferdam, and the water pumped out until the rock lay bare in the blaze of the sun. It was then honeycombed with drills, and heavily charged with mighty explosives, and connected by means of wire with an electric battery on the shore. Then the water was let in and came rushing on, first covering the rock in its surging, and then flowed on, and all was quiet—no sign anywhere of what was impending and surely coming, as when a grave is filled and you turn away in your sorrow and leave your dead there to await the trump of God.

The contractor calling his little girl to his side bade her touch with her tiny hand the key of the battery—then there came the sound as of thunder, and Hell-Gate was no more. Why stand in doubt of God who holds in his hands and at his bidding the mighty forces and powers of the universe? Why shorten his arm that he cannot save? Why abridge his power? Why

should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? His power will make them live again; his power will conform them unto the likeness of his Son; his power is set for that last day; his power holds as a sacred treasure the dust of the sleeping saints; his power once centered and operative here and the dead will live again. "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will raise us up by his own power."

We know not what forces are yet stored away in the recesses of God's universe that may come at any time in answer to his call, and touch the vital spot, and work the wonder of the resurrection of the dead. We know not what is meant by the terms—the shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God—they are all symbols of power, and will turn the army of the dead into a mighty living host.

> Abraham, when confronted by seeming impossibility, "looking upon the promises of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." (Rom. 4: 20, 21.)

"Philosophical speculation has gone through heaven and told us there is no gold there; and through hell and told us there is no fire there; and through Christ and told us there is no God there; and through the grave and told us there is no resurrection there." It preaches a "gospel" without hope, and raises the black flag of despair over our graves, over our homes and hearts stricken with the desolation of death. The be-

liever's creed is easier than the scientific or philosophic creed, and ten thousand times preferable—full of light and truth and joy.

The Bible tells us that in heaven there is something better than gold; in hell something as real and more terrible than fire; in Christ God is manifest in the flesh, and we behold in him the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person; that in the grave there is hope, and beyond the grave there is glory and joy ineffable. This is our support. This is the light that breaks through from the other world and fills our death chamber even with outbursts of rapturous song —that converts indeed our burial places into sleeping chambers from whence we look for the morning, and stretch our hands toward the further shore, waiting for the break of the coming day.

## God's Symbol and Signal.

God has not left himself without witness and prophet concerning this mighty consummation of the centuries. He has set baptism as a kind of voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord—a kind of herald, going before the shout and before the voice of the archangel and before the trump of God. This is something of the honor which God has put upon this ordinance in his churches, and a manifestation somewhat of its sublime grandeur in being brought into such significant relation to that greatest event which yet awaits the nations of the earth. It shines in the

glory, and should be seen in the sublime and august character of that closing crowning day.

Baptism is God's symbol and signal—a symbol of his power, when he raised Christ from the dead and when operating in human hearts he makes the dead live a new life, being raised up together with Christ and made to sit together with him in the heavenly places, and a signal of the achievements which grace shall yet accomplish. Alongside the black flag of despair, God has hung out this banner of hope that after all these years is still full of promise and assurance of final conquest and complete victory. Its voice is the voice of glad boasting: "We are confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in us will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."

As long as baptism lasts and is administered in its original form and spirit and purpose, so long will God's symbol and signal cheer the hearts of his people. It is the only picture in all the universe of that glorious event. Neither man in art nor God in nature has given anything besides wherein the resurrection of the dead may be seen. You commit to the earth those whom you love, and turn away in sorrow and grief with the heart crying, How long, O Lord? how long? And then witness some simple, beautiful baptism, and hear in it the voice of God saying, This is my promise, my signal, my assurance for the future.

I remember a charming picture, two pictures in one really, called the Soldier's Dream. It was a night after a day of hard fighting. Darkness was over all; and

yet the moonlight was on the scene, and the low-burning camp fire threw its dim rays over the sleeping soldier. He lay on the ground, worn with the day's conflict and covered all over with the soil of battle. There was gladness in his soul as was seen in the smiles of his face; he was dreaming of home, of going home. Out to one side, and somewhat above, there was a picture of his dream. It stood out in full view, and under the sunlight of midday. In his dream the soldier, returning from the war, had reached his home, and had passed through the gate into the avenue which led to the house. Beyond the house the workmen in the harvest field saw him in the distance and were waving their glad welcome to the returning master; the wife and children had seen him coming—had left the house—had passed out from the yard into the avenue—one child had outrun the others—had his arms about the father's neck and was in the father's embrace. It was a beautiful, touching scene, in joyous contrast with the experience of war, and made the soldier smile in his slumber.

I can hardly say that baptism is like that. And yet like it in being a double picture—giving us two pictures in one. Here, in one single act we have two separate, distinct, and entirely different scenes. There on one side the immersion—picture of death and burial, and over it all darkness and sorrow. And there on the other side the emergence—resurrection in figure, foretoken of the resurrection in fact; luminous and full of joy; the going home scene after the day of toil and

battle. Baptism for this reason is often an exultant song. It is the brightness and thrill of what is coming, caught in the soul, and the darkness becomes radiant, and the song rapturous.

That very baptism, administered there even under your own eyes, is both burial and resurrection, tells what God has done—how he raised up Jesus from the new tomb in the garden, how he quickened and raised up the believer with him to live a new life. And then setting all hearts to the future, it tells in silent yet marvelous way, what God will do concerning your own dead—how he will bring you and them together again in a glad resurrection life—how the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God—and how the dead in Christ shall rise, just as here we see them with our own eyes buried with Christ in baptism wherein also they are risen with him by the operation of God.

How wonderful it all is! How it appeals to the eye by its beauty of form and to the heart by its sublime meaning! The voice of baptism is full of music—the song which the angels sing. The song of triumph for the redeemed of the Lord—triumph in the resurrection of Jesus in the centuries gone, triumph for the golden glorious future in the resurrection of those who are his. And risen again and caught up to meet the Lord in the air, we shall be ever with the Lord. Then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be unto God—let

all the angels, all the redeemed host, let heaven and nature sing—thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. To him belong honor and power and glory and dominion forever and ever.

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light;
'Tis finished, all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin;
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.

"What rush of hallelujahs
Fills all the earth and sky!
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeaks the triumph nigh!
Oh day, for which creation
And all its tribes were made!
Oh joy, for all its former woes
A thousand-fold repaid!

"Oh then, what rapturous greetings
On Canaan's happy shore!
What knitting severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more!
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle,
That brimmed with tears of late;
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THREE VISIONS OF THE SON OF MAN.

WE come now to the close of this book and have an outlook for the future. It is the outlook of a faith which, nothing daunted by conflicts many and fierce, discerns in the field of its vision the crowning glory of the Son of man. His word is the conquering word of the ages, and leads on from victory unto victory, until every foe of him and his shall be vanquished. And then he shall reign supreme as is his right to reign. And now having as a background the eternal Sonship with its announcement at the Jordan, we have three visions of the Son of man, as seen by Stephen, as seen by Saul of Tarsus, and as seen by John on the Isle of Patmos.

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John in the Jordan; and straightway coming up out of the water he saw the heavens rent asunder and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him; and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." (Mark 1: 9-11.)

"God . . . hath spoken unto us by his Son, . . . who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1: 1, 2.)

"Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus

standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens open, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7: 55, 56.)

"At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining about me. . . . And I heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? . . . I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. . . . Whereupon, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (Acts 26: 13-19.)

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. . . . I turned to see the voice that spake with me, and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man. . . . And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead: And, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1: 10-17.)

These Scriptures, covering an immense range of view and vast difference of conditions, are brought together for the coronation of Jesus of Nazareth. Emphasize the following contrasts: Son of God—Son of man; the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person—yet coming from his humble home in Nazareth of Galilee; at the Jordan—at the right hand of God; baptized in the river—having purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

These contrasts and apparent contradictions, uniting in one person, show his twofold nature as the God-man, and his twofold sphere of operation, and his unbroken

continuity of person and mission and purpose. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," is the word which the angel brought from heaven, for he shall save his people from their sins—the same yesterday, today, and forever. "And we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor."

Christ the Lord was born of a woman, as announced by the angels to the shepherds watching in the field, and so became the Son of man and the Saviour of sinners; Christ the Lord was baptized in the Jordan and entered on his public ministry; Christ the Lord, through the shedding of his blood by death on the cross, purged our sins; Christ the Lord, having entered within the veil with the blood of the everlasting covenant, is our Intercessor at the right hand of God.

The three visions of the Son of man come to a focus on his Person. They present him in his activities after his return to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. They emphasize in a glorious and awe-inspiring picture his human sonship, with his divine and eternal sonship going before and giving surpassing splendor to his Person and efficiency to his work.

As seen by Stephen, the Son of man is at the right hand of God—the base of his operations; *standing* at the right hand of God—an attitude of solicitous concern and opening the way of escape for his servant, suffering violence at the hands of men.

As seen by Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus,

the Son of man has come afield as Saviour, rescuing a sinner bent on death. The apprehension is sudden, overpowering with splendor, and complete in its effectiveness. Henceforth Saul, the blasphemer of the Lord and persecutor of the Lord's disciples, should shine as a trophy in the diadem of his Lord.

As John saw him on Patmos, the Son of man was among the churches inspecting, commending, correcting, and for their protection. He was there perfecting the work he had begun, and making the churches what they should be as his witnesses on the earth.

In all three visions he was the same—Jesus the Son of man clothed with ineffable brightness; the same as when on earth—at Nazareth, at the Jordan, in the temptation, as the great teacher among men, as when forgiving sins, as ministering to the suffering, as when he died on the cross and rose again. In becoming human he had lost nothing of his divine nature, and in returning to his rightful place in the heavens he carried with him his human nature—a wonderful example of humanity glorified at the right hand of God, a kind of firstfruits of the plenteous golden harvest that will come hereafter.

### Baptism as Loyalty to Our Lord.

To Stephen the Son of man was Lord to whom he could commit his soul in the supreme moment of death, even tragic death; to Saul of Tarsus the Son of man was at once Jesus of Nazareth and Lord to whom he gave his heart in salvation and his life in devout, he-

roic service; to John the Son of man, in new and overpowering glory to his eyes, was his rightful Lord, whose message he would hear and keep in all faithfulness. Throughout the three visions heaven and earth were in touch, and the glory of the Lord made luminous the loyalty of the servants.

But what has all this to do with baptism, and what is the meaning of its introduction here? Nothing—or much, according to the estimate one puts upon baptism as an ordinance of our Lord's appointment, and as an expression of our relation to him.

The aim throughout these pages has been to set baptism among the great doctrines; to connect it with that greatest of all events in history—our Lord's resurrection; to hold it as the one masterful expression of the loftiest and noblest heart-experience; to set it out as one of the only two ordinances committed by our Lord to his churches. All this has been done with the purpose of giving baptism its rightful place, and of illustrating its moral dignity.

Christ glorified baptism, and baptism when rightly observed has glorified Christ through all the ages. It was no accident that his divine sonship was announced in his baptism. It was intentional and a part of the prearranged plan and purpose. For John came baptizing that the Son might be made manifest to Israel. And every baptism since declares for his sonship, and also for the joint sonship and joint heirship of all who are in him.

The supreme point in the world of religious thought

today—certainly in Christian Apologetics and almost as certainly in Christian living—is the question of the *Person of Christ and of our loyalty to him.* Loyalty is a warm-hearted feeling of fidelity and obedience to a sovereign. It is stronger than allegiance, and comes from a nobler, loftier sentiment. It is obedience to the law of love. Love is the most powerful compulsion and makes obedience one's meat and drink, his delight and joy. Baptism as a law in Christ's kingdom, is at once test and expression of loyalty. While typifying Christ's sonship it typifies also his lordship. It declares before all the world that we are loyal to Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. Loyalty is the response of the heart and life to his call and his commandments. Some one has said: "The first great lesson is obedience; the second great lesson is to keep obedience from becoming slavery." And that is loyalty—true to the form without becoming a formalist.

## The New Testament Emphasis.

Baptism as a New Testament law appeals to the loyal conscience and convictions. Its meaning moreover, as an ordinance, signalizes and gives emphasis to some of the greatest doctrines in the system. Though of minor intrinsic worth, it is yet of imperative importance, and even momentous as the New Testament emphasis of doctrines concerning Christ in his Person and relation to us. Baptism cannot suffer violence without doing violence also to these doctrines. It is

the casket of these doctrines, and because of its treasure takes something of their worth and merit and high place in the kingdom of truth.

The surrender of doctrine never comes single-handed. The going of one makes way for the going of another. Modifying one or corrupting one will surely lead to modifying and corrupting others. The removal of one less important, or its displacement in the system, may loosen the very foundations of doctrines most vital and fundamental. Faithfulness and purity of each are the only safety for all. The New Testament is a unit in its doctrines and ordinances, and the foundations will remain sure only as these doctrines and ordinances are kept inviolate in their testimony for the Son of man.

The Baptist Review and Expositor* contained in recent issues two masterful and timely articles written one by Dr. E. H. Johnson, of Crozer Seminary, the other by Dr. James Orr, of Scotland. The great thought of these articles I should like in some modest way, simply by reference if not otherwise, to incorporate in the line of thought running all through these pages. Dr. Orr advocates the lordship of Jesus; Dr. Johnson in brilliant, characteristic style, emphasizes lordship and loyalty—lordship in the King, loyalty in the disciple. The two articles supplement and buttress each other; the two great truths merge into each other, and as one stands so will the other.

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A few sentences from Dr. Johnson, though disconnected, will show in part his point of view:

> "The New Testament gives us Christ. . . . The Christ of history remains the Christ of the New Testament. . . . A proper relation is one of loyalty on the part of *the individual. The lordship of Christ, the loyalty of Christians* sets forth, as well as formula may, what Baptists ought to stand for. Such an attitude may be taken by any Christian denomination. . . . Our loyalty to Christ is practically loyalty to the New Testament.
>
> "The lordship of Christ and the loyalty of Christians furnish the starting point for Baptists in our day. . . . His commands are our laws. Loyalty is love for the lawgiver. Loyalty to Christ is the love which he describes when he said, He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. That Christ makes a requirement is reason enough to a loyal heart for obedience. . . .
>
> "Loyalty to him requires us to hold the highest view of his person and of his work. . . . A life ruled by loyalty to Christ as Lord, through acceptance of Christ as Redeemer. Christ is Lord, let us be loyal."

The cry is sometimes made, We need Christ, and not a book; that we must needs go back to Christ rather than to the Bible. That sounds well, and has the ring of doing honor to Christ, but in fact is absurd and misleading. It is impossible to know Christ at all, except through the New Testament, either as we read it for ourselves or hear through others. The New Testament is "written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20: 31.)

The Bible, with special emphasis upon the New Testament, is our guide, our only guide for doctrine and

duty, for belief and life. Abandon the New Testament and we would soon be without Christ. Break on the New Testament in one point, either doctrine or ordinance, and others will surely follow. "Loyalty to Christ is practically loyalty to the New Testament"—so also loyalty to the New Testament is loyalty to Christ.

We cannot discriminate between the lawgiver and his law. Love for the one requires obedience to the other. Christ stands back of his ordinances and puts into them the fullness of his authority. They are his law, and loyalty to them is loyalty to him. A break here is sure to make a break elsewhere. Baptism in its doctrine, and as an act of obedience, is a kind of outpost for the citadel of truth. Fidelity here, loyalty here is of immense and pressing importance.

Surely there are great dangers ahead when baptism can be undervalued, even set aside altogether on the ground of its being "only a command." When the pickets have been captured or betrayed or prove traitorous, we know not what may follow. Baptism is set for the high task of standing for lordship in the Lord and loyalty in the believer, and is given this place of distinction and rank in the New Testament among the great doctrines.

Baptism is the one act in which the believer impersonates his Lord in doing the very thing his Lord did; the one act in which he commemorates in picture and emblem the resurrection of his Lord; the one act which gives an outward expression of what has been wrought

in his own heart by the power of his Lord; it is the one act which foreshows in picture the coming event which his Lord shall bring in when he comes again and the dead are raised up by the word of his power! We put great honor upon baptism, because therein we honor our Lord and declare our loyalty to him. He has intrusted us with casket and jewel; we will stand faithful to the casket, lest in its loss we lose also the jewel.

### We Worship Him in Baptism.

The Son of man was first the Son of God. Being the Son of God, he became the Son of man that he might save the sons of men.

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1: 1, 14.)
>
> "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4: 4, 5.)

In emphasizing and adjusting the manifold relation of Christ—as King, Priest, Prophet, Saviour, Teacher —we must not forget that first and foremost comes his Divinity in character and his Deity in Person! This is the undergirding of all else, giving support and effectiveness. It was as a Son born that he was called "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Because he is God he is "the Mighty to save," and "saves unto the

uttermost all who come unto God through him." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and we are complete in him, and he is our all and in all, our wisdom and righteousness, our sanctification and redemption. "I am crucified with Christ. . . . I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2: 20.)

Baptism as a ceremony is an act of worship. This makes the spirit of baptism; and makes perhaps its richest essence, for sincere, devout worship is the highest possible outgoing of the human soul. God has set the ordinance for noble service and given it exalted rank among the commandments of our Lord. It appeals strongly to the hearts of those who love, and speaks wonderful things for their joy. In its simple administration it often becomes a rapturous song. The spirit that comes into genuine baptism is the same in kind as the spirit of the angels as they worship around the throne and find their highest delight in doing the will of God.

Baptism stands for Christ, expressing not only loyalty in our obedience to him as King, but also devout, joyous worship of him as Lord. Here in this simple act we worship God—can worship him in spirit and in truth—worship God in the Unity of his Person and Trinity of his Being. Here we worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as really as when we sing the great Doxology. Here we declare our personal love and loyalty and devotion and worship of the Son of man, declare for him as Lord and God—as our Lord and

our God—as "my Lord and my God," and worship him in the beauty of holiness.

The ordinance comes to this loftier view and service, and becomes more beautiful in its moral greatness as we recognize its larger, richer meaning. It speaks for the Son of man, and speaks for him as the Son of God; expresses our love for him as Saviour, our loyalty to him as King, and our worship of him as God. And so baptism, administered as he gave it, in form and spirit and purpose, is a plea always for the great doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus.

It serves in this simple but effective way to maintain this glorious truth among the churches and before the world. To lose baptism, or in any way to weaken or mar its force, is to lose its meaning; and in losing its meaning we lose its witness for the divine character of Jesus and the mighty things which God has wrought through him. It is indeed only an ordinance, but what wonderful things it holds within itself, and how lofty and beautiful is the service which it renders among the people of God! It is the enfoldment of much of the very truth of God and the embodiment of the noblest and mightiest experiences of the human heart. A key may not be of great value, but the key to the Bank of England would be defended at any cost by the armies of the Empire.

### Conflict Concerning His Person.

The conflict is against the Deity of Jesus. This basal doctrine of the Christian system, a doctrine funda-

mental and vital to every human interest in time and eternity, is assailed. The Son of God holds the keys of hell and death.

In the article already mentioned Dr. Orr makes a strong defense for the Divinity of Jesus. He puts himself in the field of Christian Apologetics and at the front of the conflict in a masterful way. Devout, gifted, trained in the best schools, he writes as one who has no doubts to answer for himself, and from the fullness and conviction of his heart. There is no mistaking the conflict, either as to its fierceness or its outcome. In a clear and powerful method he arraigns the "higher critics" in their dealing with the life and character of our Lord, and makes against their position the five-fold indictment, that it:

1. "Is a decisive break with historic Christianity."
2. "Is a break fatal to the life and hope of the church."
3. "Leaves the world without the gospel that it needs."
4. "Destroys the basis of certainty in religion."
5. "Is not tenable, logically or historically."

This is a severe arraignment, and given in a most telling way. These five words are dismal words—decisive break, fatal to life and hope, leaves the world hopeless in its needs, destroys the basis, is not tenable. They hang around the human life like the black drapery of the carriage in which the dead ride to the grave. It is black, all black, and black beyond compare. And this is offered a world in sin and suffering and want, in place of the simple story that is told us in the Book of Life.

As showing the results to which that theory brings us, and how it strips our Lord of his rightful robes of royalty, and leaves us helpless with nothing to hope for, Dr. Orr quotes the following eloquent words from Dr. Martineau in his "Loss and Gain in Recent Theology:"

> "From the Person of Jesus everything official, attached to Him by evangelists or divines, has fallen away; when they put such false robes on Him they were but leading Him to death. The pomp of royal lineage and fulfilled prediction, the prerogative of King, of Priest, of Judge, the Advent with retinue of angels on the clouds of heaven, are to us mere deforming investitures, misplaced, like court dresses, on the 'spirits of the just,' and He is simply the Divine Flower of humanity, blossoming after ages of spiritual growth—the realized possibility of life in God.
>
> "All that has been added to that real historic scene—the angels that stand round his birth, and the fiend that tempts his youth; the dignities that await his future—the throne, the trumpet, the assize, the bar of judgment; with all the apocalyptic splendors and terrors that ensue—Hades and the Crystal Sea, Paradise and the Infernal Gulf, nay, the very boundary walls of the Cosmic panorama that contain these things, have for us utterly melted away and left us amid the infinite space and the silent stars."

It has been apparent for several years that we are coming into this conflict concerning the Deity of Jesus. Shall we still call him "my Lord and my God" in devout and joyous worship, or shall we count him simply man with no higher or other nature than that wherein we ourselves were born? For my part, I rather welcome the conflict. It will give the doctrine new vitality in our belief, and new supremacy in the world of thought. A great discussion of a great doctrine seldom works evil and often brings much good. A doctrine,

even a really great doctrine, may lose its hold upon us by our merely acquiescing in it or simply taking it for granted. Herein we are suffering now for want of credal force. Creeds are weak and useless save as the expression of convictions born of the heart and mind.

### Baptism Set for His Defence.

No one can rob us of truth or destroy its power or mar its beauty, if we ourselves hold it for ourselves. Our own experience of great doctrines is our best and mightiest safeguard. The experience of Thomas will always bring afresh the conviction of Thomas, "My Lord and my God." God will bring good out of evil in this conflict. The cross and crucifixion were only three days from the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus. If the destructive critics bring on the hour of darkness and make us feel as Mary did in the garden —"they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him"—*yet even then* we may be closer than we dream to a new revelation of him in his risen glory and to the joyous outburst from our hearts, Rabboni, Rabboni!

It is ours to cultivate by whatever methods we can a profound and richer sense of his Divinity—of his Sonship and Godhead—of his being to our heart King of kings and Lord of lords. We forget how much may be done to cultivate and enlarge our faith in a great doctrine, to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And

baptism when rightly observed is an excellent means to this end, and very effective as an educational force training us in the great doctrines. It puts our Lord before us in wonderful fashion, and in those very things which declare his name and power and honor and dominion. It uncovers in a marvelous way his mightiest achievement in which he was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, and is his witness unto the end of the ages.

I have on purpose set the ordinance in the midst of this conflict. Indeed, our Lord himself has set it here as a witness for himself and as a token of his wondrous grace. It will do valiant and invaluable service if we maintain it as the embodiment and expression of the great truths concerning him and his relation to his people. As long as there are obedient and worshipful hearts following our Lord in baptism, so long will the world hear the song of coronation. Baptism is itself an education in the noblest doctrines, and has really great and instructive doctrinal value. The baptismal scene is full of wonderful lessons. It expresses the great experiences of human hearts and tells with power the glorious facts of redemption as they have wrought themselves into human convictions, hopes and joys.

And, after all, the strongest defense of the faith is found in what one has felt in his heart of the grace of God. Thomas had no more doubt after his experience on that memorable evening when his Lord met him eight days after the resurrection; the two disciples who went away to Emmaus doubted no more when they

had seen the Lord. And those who feel now the touch in their hearts of the risen Christ have no doubt as to his resurrection or as to his saving power. Personal salvation sets aside all gainsayers and stands out stoutly for our Lord and Saviour.

### Illustrations of His Saving Power.

I remember two occasions of thrilling interest and powerful illustrative force. They both occurred at Nashville in the Tabernacle, which accommodates four or five thousand people, and was thronged both times to its utmost capacity. In the first Mr. D. L. Moody was the speaker, and his theme was the Divinity of Jesus. He emphasized the incomparable life as told in the Gospels; pointed out the world's awful need of a Divine Saviour, one Mighty to save; told what he himself had experienced of the saving power of the Lord Jesus, and related what he had witnessed in others of that wondrous grace which saves unto the uttermost. It was a wonderful discourse even for the great evangelist—a simple, straightforward testimony of what he knew, and of what he knew that he knew. His soul glowed as he told with rapturous joy of the work of grace which comes from the Divine Saviour, and the great audience was moved by the mighty word, so simple and yet so powerful.

The other occasion was even more marked in some respects. The speaker was Judge George R. Sage, of the United States District Court. He had come from Cincinnati to try some special cases in the court at

Nashville, and had won a great place in the community by his bearing both on the bench and in private, and was made the guest of honor in many places of social distinction.

He was a quiet, devout, Christian man, and Sunday after Sunday worshiped at the First Baptist Church. In my study one morning (I was then pastor of the First Church) he said in a modest way that he wanted to deliver a lecture in Nashville on "Why God Doesn't Kill the Devil." The subject startled me, and yet my confidence in Judge Sage made me feel that any subject would be safe in his hands. In due time the lecture came. It had been widely advertised, and the great auditorium was filed to the utmost; perhaps the most brilliant assemblage in some respects that ever gathered there, certainly the most brilliant audience that Nashville could furnish—business men, educators, professional men, those from high social life, vast numbers of those from the humbler walks—all wondering what such a man would do with such a theme.

Judge Sage was introduced; appeared in full evening dress, quiet, unassuming, and yet bearing in his face the marks of intense earnestness; walked to the speaker's desk and (without notes, even, as I recall) stood before that vast audience as about to deliver an opinion in a case where life and death were in the balance. The audience hushed in stillness to catch his first word. He simply talked, but oh, what talking it was! His words in conversational tone could be heard throughout the large hall.

The purpose of the lecture was soon uncovered, and proved to be a discussion of the Doctrine of Evil, and why God permits sin and suffering; a clear, profound, philosophical argument from first to last, and the ablest statement I have ever heard of this confessedly difficult problem. For more than two hours the audience hung on the words of the distinguished jurist, never once slackened in interest, but followed him to the end. It was a triumph both in speaking and in listening.

The speaker throughout, in reverent and devout simplicity, exalted God in his mighty and sovereign grace and providence, and came in his discussion to speak of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. It became necessary to speak of the divine Sonship, the very Godhead of Jesus, in "whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," as the background for presenting his full humanity. It was a supreme moment. The speaker seemed leading us into the Holy of Holies, and in spirit uncovered as Moses before the mystery of the burning bush. In words of marvelous power he stated his belief in the true Deity of Jesus, his abiding faith in him as a personal Saviour, his unclouded conviction and joyous worship of him as God. For fifteen minutes he set out the great doctrine of his Divinity in a clear and masterful statement. The effect was remarkable; the vast audience almost caught its breath to listen as the great hearted man, stepping to the front of the platform, led us into the coronation moment. My soul even now fairly tingles in the recollection of that moment when we had a new vision of

the Son of man clothed with honor and glory and dominion at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

### An Experimental Conception.

These two occasions followed close one on the other. The two men on different lines swept on to the same glorious conclusion. Both of them died shortly after and went home to meet their King. Welcomed into his presence and beholding the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, they surely felt that the half had never been told, and worshiped him there as they had worshiped him here, King of kings and Lord of lords.

These incidents show the reality and power and joy of an experimental conception of a great fact in its doctrinal significance. With these two men Jesus in person was their Lord; the Christ who was once dead, but is now alive and for evermore at the right hand of God; the Son of man in the fullness of his human nature, but also the Son of God transcendent in his Divine nature and grace and saving power. They held the great doctrine of the essential Deity of Jesus not only from having been taught, but also from their individual experience of its fact and power in their hearts. And this evidence from experience is the most powerful and conclusive and convincing of all evidence.

These two examples, though illustrious and of manifest power, are not exceptional. They are in line of a succession that reaches back to the Apostles, and be-

yond the Apostles. "We speak that we do know and testify that which we have seen." We can stand in line with them. He who sought the two disciples going away to Emmaus and Thomas in the despair of disbelief, is not far from every one of us. It is ours to walk with him among the candlesticks, to behold him in his glory at the right hand of the throne of God, to see him and hear his call as we go the highways of life. Finding him and his finding us, is the end of controversy. This is the stronghold for safety, and the rock of defense in the fierceness of the conflict.

That man has his feet on the eternal rock who can say with Mary, Rabboni, Rabboni, or with Thomas, My Lord and my God, or with prophet and apostle, "I believe, and therefore have I spoken." For "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God," has come upon him as upon Saul of Tarsus. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This gives us everlasting certainties, and creates a certitude which cannot be shaken—"steadfast, unmoved, and immovable."

### The Son of Man's Final Triumph.

"Became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2: 8-11.)

"His countenance was as the sun shining in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen: And have the keys of hell and death."

The sublime thought of the final triumph of the Son of man has come to the front again and again in these pages, and found welcome expression, sometimes in one setting, sometimes in another. The word triumph has been the watchword of the centuries—a word full of history and full also of prophetic vision. It is in the heart and on the lips of the redeemed host, and they caught it from their Lord who ascended on high leading captivity captive. It enters into their service, and is the key note of their songs of worship.

Oh, that wondrous, wondrous word that has come down from Patmos as he walked among the churches in his glory and all conquering power! I am he that liveth, *and was dead;* and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death. It uncovers in one glorious word the final triumph of the redeemed when death and the grave shall have passed as an experience, and there shall be no more death.

His very triumph, as well as theirs, lies in his being the Son of man, and comes by virtue of his power in being the Son of God. And these two mighty facts of his being and character he put into his ordinance, and in this embodiment gave them to his people as his living witness among men. It was a mighty moment in the world's history when at his baptism in the Jordan

the Son of man, fresh from Mary's humble home at Nazareth, was announced by the voice from heaven as the Son of God. And that mighty moment has its counterpart, or its echo with more or less of power, in the baptism of today as the believer in that simple yet sublime way declares for him both as Son of man and Son of God.

These pages opened with Jesus at the Jordan, and close with him at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He was Son of God as he was baptized in the river, in figure of his burial and resurrection, and now he is Son of man at his Father's right hand in glory. He has the same wonderful story of the Jordan repeated over and over again, as the years and centuries go by, in the public act of those who are buried with him in baptism wherein they are also risen with him. And in every administration of the ordinance we may hear over again that word from Patmos—*I was dead, and am alive again for evermore*—telling the glorious work of the past and foretelling the oncoming of the day when he shall be crowned King of nations as he is now King of saints. Baptism is the drum-beat of the armies of the Lord marching to victory—conquering and to conquer.

Jesus is Son of God and Son of man. Operating from his base at the right hand of the throne of God, and through the agencies which he has appointed, the Son of man is moving for the consummation of his glorious work. He is always the same, whether on earth or in heaven, whether at the right hand of God

as Stephen saw him, or in the field as Saul of Tarsus saw him, or among the churches as John saw him arrayed in splendor and power. We gladly give our hearts to him as his, and hail him with joy as ours; we hail him as our Saviour, our King, our Lord, and earnestly pray for the speedy oncoming and incoming of his kingdom, and for the universal coronation, when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And *crown Him* Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him *all majesty* ascribe,
And *crown Him Lord* of all.

Oh that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at His feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all.

## Praise with a Prayer.

Lord Jesus, thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Thou art our salvation, our joy, our song, our all and in all.

This book is brought to thee as a tribute of love and as a contribution of service. I am happy in its completion, and here record my gratitude to thee for life and health and opportunity to say this word for thy wondrous work. O, use it for thy glory! May it be over-

ruled and blessed, and in every way made to tell for the furtherance of the Gospel of thy grace. May it help people everywhere to a larger view and holier love of the ordinances of thy house.

Grant, O Lord, a special blessing upon the great people, who are called by thy name, and for whom I have ventured to speak. Thou hast given them thy favor in large measure and in many ways. O, do for them yet larger things, that they may do larger things for thee! Help us to be true to thee—faithful and loyal in all things. May we be present, O Lord Jesus, in thy great coronation day. Help us, O, help us, for thy coronation now in our hearts.

"O, Thou who in Jordan didst bow Thy meek head,
And 'whelmed in our sorrow, didst sink to the dead,
Then rose from the darkness to glory above,
And claimed for Thy chosen the kingdom of love;

"O Jesus, our Saviour, O Jesus, our Lord,
By the life of Thy passion, the grace of Thy word,
Accept us, redeem us, dwell ever within,
To keep, by Thy Spirit, our spirits from sin;

"Thy footsteps we follow, to bow in the tide,
And are buried with Thee in the death Thou hast died;
Then wake in Thy likeness to walk in the way
That brightens and brightens to shadowless day."

*Amen.*

Bap always prevent place.
ex Rome

August Scene
Monument of glorious acts.
Symbol of heart Exp.
Cure of faith.
Oath of solemn obligation
Prophecy of Great Evil
[illegible]

37 - 3 Resurrections

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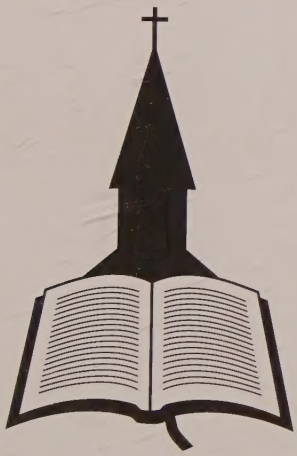

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